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## Paradise Closed

**Energy, inspiration and making art in Rome in the works of Harriet Hosmer, William Wetmore Story, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, Elizabeth Gaskell and Henry James, 1847-1903**

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*Awarding institution:*  
King's College London

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**Paradise Closed:**  
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**the works of Harriet Hosmer, William**  
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**Nathaniel Hawthorne, Sophia Peabody**  
**Hawthorne, Elizabeth Gaskell and Henry**  
**James, 1847-1903**

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## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	5
Abstract.....	6
List of Illustrations .....	8
Introduction .....	9
I. GOING HOME TO THE ‘LAND OF ART’ .....	9
II. ARTISTIC ENERGY IN THE ETERNAL CITY .....	40
Chapter One: Rome the Mine: Excavating, Accessing and Harnessing Artistic Energy.....	57
I. ‘OBJECTS OF CURIOSITY’: MATERIAL ENCOUNTERS IN ROME .....	57
The Discovery of the Porta Portese <i>Venus</i> .....	57
Roman Things .....	60
Relics, Art and Storage.....	67
Experiencing Roman Things .....	74
II. ‘A VERY WONDERFUL ARRANGEMENT OF PROVIDENCE’: EXCAVATING ROMAN ENERGY.....	78
Excavation and the ‘Providential’ Mine.....	78
III. EXCAVATING THE MODEL: MAKING NEW ART FROM OLD THINGS .....	92
Sexual Desire and Harnessing Artistic Energy .....	
The Subterranean and the Subconscious .....	104
Chapter Two: Rome the Factory: Recycled energy, repetition and the anxious mechanics of copying .....	114
I. Recognition and Repetition in Rome .....	114
Ideas of New and Old in an Eternal City.....	114
Inspiration and the Receptive Imagination.....	119
Recycled Tales of Roman Recognition .....	122
II. UNEASY RECYCLING AND AURA.....	138
‘Thousands of Venuses, but no Women’: The Paradox of the New in Neoclassical Sculpture.....	138
Dilution and ‘Merely Mechanical Reproduction’ .....	154
III. THE ORIGINAL COPY: AUTHENTICITY AND ENERGY TRANSFER IN ROMAN COPYING .....	162
‘Spiritual’ Copying as Preservation.....	162
Locating the ‘Spiritual’ in Print Culture: Tauchnitz Editions of <i>The Marble Faun</i> .....	179
Chapter Three: Rome the Séance: Un-dead artists and the rejection of loss.....	184
I. ‘BE EARNEST’: SPIRITUALISM, ARTISTIC PRACTICE AND ROMAN ENTROPY .....	184

‘A distinct Romeward trend’: Transatlantic Spiritualism in Rome .....	184
Spiritualist Practice amongst the Expatriate Artists .....	194
II. SPIRITUALISM AND ROMAN ENTROPY .....	202
Entropic Rome and the Search for Continuity .....	202
William Wetmore Story’s Anti-Entropic Musical Energy .....	206
The Science of Spiritualism and Rome’s Energetic Ghosts .....	213
III. SPIRITUALIST THINGS, ROMAN THINGS AND COLLABORATIVE SPIRITUAL ART .	218
‘Each man would ask of all objects what they mean’: Spiritualist Things .....	218
Anti-Entropic Spiritual Collaboration with the Past .....	224
IV. ‘ALL THE GRAVEN IMAGES WE HAVE MADE [...] PURSUE US’: GALATEA AND THE FANTASY OF ANTI-ENTROPIC ARTISTIC RESURRECTION .....	237
Conclusion: Rome the Threshold: Roman triangulation of Anglo-American transatlanticism and the legacy of ‘lives that shrink’ .....	248
Bibliography .....	262

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My parents, Margaret and Richard, and my brother, Simon, know far more about academia, research and perseverance than I do, and have made possible the existence of this thesis.

## Abstract

This thesis examines the ways in which the artistic practice of key members the expatriate community in mid- to late nineteenth-century Rome related to contemporary ideas of energy and inspiration. William Wetmore Story, a central figure in the expatriate community, arrived in Rome in 1847. Between 1847 and 1859, the number of American artists living in Rome grew from four to 400; these American arrivals joined the British community of artists already established in the city. Rome, for all these expatriate artists, acted as a creative force field: it was experienced as a source of artistic energy, the conception of which was informed by contemporary scientific theories of energy and entropy viewed through the filter of the Romantic notion of Rome as a site that enabled ‘spontaneous creation’. William Wetmore Story, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Elizabeth Gaskell and Harriet Hosmer explored ways in which Roman artistic energy could be accessed and repurposed in their own work. This recycling of Roman artistic energy was an attempt to navigate the paradox of a city that was considered both ‘eternal’ and ruined. These artists formulated an idea of Roman artistic energy that could be separated from the art object and transferred between artworks that therefore acted as storage for that energy. Artists thus participated in the recycling of Rome’s artistic energy from old to new art, a practice that worked to counteract prevailing fears inspired both by the entropy of the city of Rome, and the entropy of universal energy, of which Rome’s ruins were evocative. The publication of Henry James’ group biography of the community, *William Wetmore Story and His Friends*, in 1903 provides the end date for this study. In the biography, James identified Rome as a ‘Paradise Closed’: a city that simultaneously figured as a closed system in which energy could be endlessly recycled, and one that was out of reach, no longer accessible.

This thesis engages with critical debate in thing theory about the psychological and narrative elements of things, and relates this debate to the way developments in physics and ideas regarding the circulation and preservation of energy permeated nineteenth-century thinking about art and time. It also seeks to complicate a view of ‘transatlantic’ literature in the mid- to late nineteenth century by presenting Rome as a triangulating point of encounter between British and American artists and writers

that produced its own distinctive art. Rome's mobile, transferrable artistic energy bridged the divide between old and new things, between living and dead artists in Rome, between the members of its nineteenth-century expatriate community, and between the old and new worlds of Europe and America.



## List of Illustrations

- 1 Paul Akers, *The Dead Pearl Diver*, 1858. Portland Museum of Art. 95
- 2 Unidentified photographer, albumen print of female hands tipped into p. 183  
142 of Tauchnitz edition of *Transformation, or The Romance of Monte Beni*, 1860, the Tauchnitz edition of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*. The British Library.
- 3 Harriet Hosmer, *Clasped Hands of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, 1853. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. 232

## Introduction

One of the chief causes that make Rome the favorite residence of artists—their ideal home which they sigh for in advance, and are so loath to migrate from, after once breathing its enchanted air—is, doubtless, that they there find themselves in force, and are numerous enough to create a congenial atmosphere. In every other clime they are isolated strangers; in this land of art, they are free citizens.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun*<sup>1</sup>

1. The energy of the universe is constant.
2. The entropy of the universe tends towards a maximum.

Rudolph Clausius, *The Mechanical Theory of Heat*<sup>2</sup>

### I. GOING HOME TO THE ‘LAND OF ART’

‘We are really truly coming to Rome!!!!!!’ wrote Elizabeth Gaskell, with six exclamation marks’ worth of excitement, in February 1857.<sup>3</sup> That year, Gaskell and her daughters spent three months in Rome, in the home of the sculptor William Wetmore Story and his wife Emelyn at the Casa Cabrale on the Via Sant’Isodoro. The Storys were at the centre of the expatriate community in Rome, in which prominent British and American artists and writers circulated and others frequently visited. When, half a century later, Henry James expanded his biography of Story to include this circle by adding the epithet ‘*And His Friends*’ to the title, he created a work that included ‘possibly every artist of any note in every existing genre in antebellum America’ and many of their British counterparts.<sup>4</sup> Amongst these were Paul Akers,

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<sup>1</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 102. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>2</sup> Rudolph Clausius, *The Mechanical Theory of Heat with Its Application to the Steam-Engine and to the Physical Properties of Bodies* (London: John Van Vaust, 1867), p. 365.

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Gaskell, *The Letters of Mrs. Gaskell*, ed. by J. A. V. Chapple and Arthur Pollard (Manchester: Mandolin, 1997), p. 445. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text as ‘Chapple’.

<sup>4</sup> Henry James, *William Wetmore Story and His Friends* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1903). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text; Kathleen Lawrence, *Aesthetic Transcendentalism and its Legacy: Margaret Fuller, William Wetmore Story and Henry James* (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Boston University, 2003), p. 236.

Henry Adams, Matthew Arnold, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Robert Browning, Francis Boott, Elizabeth Boott, Edward Burne-Jones, Charlotte Cushman, Christopher Pearse Cranch, Thomas Crawford, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, John Fields, Margaret Fuller, John Gibson, Horatio Greenough, Grace Greenwood, Augustus Hare, Humphry Ward, Mary Augusta Ward, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, Harriet Hosmer, Anna Jameson, Fanny Kemble, Louisa Lander, Walter Savage Landor, Edmonia Lewis, James Russell Lowell, Harriet Martineau, Charles Eliot Norton, William Page, Coventry Patmore, Hiram Powers, Lady William Russell, Emma Stebbins, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Charles Sumner, William Makepeace Thackeray, Frances Trollope, and Hamilton Wilde.<sup>5</sup> As the Storys' guest, Gaskell found herself at the hub of expatriate society in the city, and Katie Winkworth, who had travelled with the Gaskells, reported that 'Mrs Gaskell and her daughters are "all the fashion" here.'<sup>6</sup> Gaskell, who had anticipated and feared negative reviews of her forthcoming biography of Charlotte Brontë in London before leaving for Rome, described her time there as the 'tip-top point' of her life (Chapple, 477).

This thesis situates a discussion about energy and making art in Rome in the mid-nineteenth century within this community of expatriate artists. In examining the role Rome played as a 'force field' of artistic energy and inspiration, it focuses on certain artists whose presence, work, or both, engaged with and influenced the concerns of the community: William Wetmore Story, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, Charles Dickens, Harriet Hosmer, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Henry James. While directing attention to these figures predominantly, this thesis acknowledges the collaborative, communal qualities of this group of expatriates by using the term 'expatriate artistic community' to refer to them and their peers in the city.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For more extensive lists see William L. Vance, *America's Rome*, Vol. 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 189 and Ernest Earnest's *Expatriates and Patriots: American Artists, Scholars, and Writers in Europe* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1968), pp. 121-2. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>6</sup> Catherine Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials of Catherine Winkworth*, Vol. 2., ed. by Margaret J. Shaen (Clifton: E. Austin and Son, 1886), p. 128. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>7</sup> See William L. Vance and Ernest Earnest, as in note 3, for information regarding members of the community.

This study begins in 1847, when William Wetmore Story gave up his profession as a lawyer in Boston and travelled to Rome.<sup>8</sup> While significant figures and publications, notably Dickens' *Pictures from Italy* (1846), predate Story's arrival in the city, his move to Rome coincided with a period of rapid increase in the population of American expatriate artists that would transform the expatriate artistic community in the city and create the conditions considered in this thesis. As a host, permanent expatriate resident, sculptor, poet and travel writer, Story embodied the transatlantic, multimedia approach to making art that this thesis explores: his Roman guidebook *Roba di Roma* (1863) is a portrait of the Rome of the mid- to late nineteenth century; *Conversations in a Studio* (1890) is a treatise on what it meant to make and experience art in Rome during the period. He was a central figure around whom other expatriate artists gathered.

Harriet Hosmer left Massachusetts for Rome in 1852, when she was twenty-two, and studied sculpture in the studio of John Gibson. She lived in Rome until the mid-1880s, producing celebrated sculptures including *Zenobia* (1859), *Beatrice Cenci* (1857) and *The Clasped Hands of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning* (1853).<sup>9</sup>

Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning were in Rome in 1853 to sit for the cast of Hosmer's sculpture, having left England for Italy in 1845 (Carr, 92). While their relationship to Florence is well documented, the Brownings frequently rented apartments near the Storys in Rome, on one occasion taking rooms on the Via Felice, near the Palazzo Barberini, for a year. They spent three winters in a row in Rome between 1858 and 1861. The Brownings' residence in Rome was thus more regular and more established than that of many others less questioningly associated with the Roman expatriate network, including Hawthorne.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Jan Seidler, *A Critical Reappraisal of the Career of William Wetmore Story (1819-1895), American Sculptor and Man of Letters* (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Boston University, 1985) p. 65. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>9</sup> Cornelia Carr, *Harriet Hosmer: Letters and Memories* (London: John Lane, the Bodley Head, 1913), p. 317. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>10</sup> Details of the lengths of time spent in Rome by the Brownings and Hawthornes are given in Monika Mueller, *George Eliot U.S.: Transatlantic Literary and Cultural Perspectives* (Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2005), p. 205,

Nathaniel Hawthorne and his wife Sophia Peabody Hawthorne arrived in Rome in February 1858 and left in May 1859, though the intervening summer months were spent in Florence.<sup>11</sup> The visit was likely to have been the idea of Peabody Hawthorne, who had studied reproductions of Italian art in New England as an art student. Both Hawthornes went on to produce books about their experiences: Hawthorne published his Roman ‘romance’ *The Marble Faun* in 1860; his *French and Italian Notebooks* were published posthumously in 1869, edited by Peabody Hawthorne, and Peabody Hawthorne’s *Notes in England and Italy* came out in the same year.<sup>12</sup>

Finally, Henry James first encountered the expatriate community in Rome in 1869 when he was twenty-six.<sup>13</sup> The city, country and its expatriate artists dominate his subsequent writing, including *The Last of the Valerii* (1874), *Roderick Hudson* (1875) and *Daisy Miller* (1879). The publication of James’ *William Wetmore Story and His Friends* (1903) marks the closing date of this study. The text is an exercise in the biography of an individual, a group, and a place in time. As James states in the preface to *Roderick Hudson*:

Really, universally, relations stop nowhere, and the exquisite problem of the artist is eternally but to draw, by a geometry of his own, the circle within which they shall happily *appear* to do so. He is in the perpetual predicament that the continuity of things is the whole matter, for him, of comedy and tragedy; that this continuity is never, by the space of an instant or an inch, broken, and that, to do anything at all, he has at once intensely to consult and intensely to ignore it.<sup>14</sup>

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and Frank R. DiFederico and Julia Markus, ‘The Influence of Robert Browning on the Art of William Wetmore Story,’ *Browning Institute Studies*, Vol. 1 (1973), pp. 63-85 (p. 63).

<sup>11</sup> These are the dates given in Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, ed. by Thomas Woodson (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1980). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text as ‘*Notebooks*’. Nathalia Wright in *American Novelists in Italy: the Discoverers, Allston to James* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965) gives January as the arrival date on p. 138.

<sup>12</sup> This thesis will refer throughout to Sophia Peabody Hawthorne as Peabody Hawthorne, to distinguish her from her husband.

<sup>13</sup> Robert L. Gale, ‘Henry James and Italy’, *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 14, No. 2 (1959), pp. 157-70 (p. 157).

<sup>14</sup> Henry James, *Roderick Hudson* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1935), p. vii. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

*William Wetmore Story and his Friends* provides an elegiac portrayal of community that thrived on ‘relations’ and sought to further ‘continuity’. This community had been transformed, like the city of Rome, by the unification of Italy in 1871 and had disappeared by the date of the book’s publication.

This thesis considers the continuity of the lives and works of this selection of artists—male and female, American and British, visual artists and writers—within the context of their broader community in Rome and their relationship to the idea and experience of artistic energy. Their artistic output comprises poems, fiction, non-fiction, two-dimensional visual art and three-dimensional visual art. Frequently, members of the expatriate artistic community moved between media. Like them, this thesis, while acknowledging the various contexts, traditions and constraints of different media, considers different kinds of art and writing side by side, considering non-fiction and fiction sources from the period as equally valuable accounts of expatriate artistic life, and sculpture alongside poetry as the output of a shared artistic culture in the city.

When William Wetmore Story set himself the task of explaining the appeal of Rome to the expatriate artist in his poem ‘At the Villa Conti’, his answer takes the form of a series of negatives: ‘Ask me not why I love... Who ever gave a reason for his love?’ Rome is ‘no place like other cities are’, and ‘[n]othing is like Rome.’<sup>15</sup> The logic of Story’s verse suggests this string of negatives is explanation enough. The city is so exceptional that it is indescribable. The opening pages of this introduction attempt to answer the question Story’s poem seeks to avoid: to ask what Rome *was* rather than what it was not. The following sections break down expatriate artists’ perceptions of and practices in Rome in order to create a picture of how, in Rome, a space of artistic exhibition in which culture was collectively consumed, conditions combined to create a unique experience of exchange between British and American artists, things and art, literature and sculpture, and present and past during this period. This unique experience is the unstated reason not only for Story’s love, but for Gaskell’s, and the many diverse and otherwise unconnected expatriate artists who visited Rome in the mid-nineteenth century, and made it their home, either emotionally or physically, and frequently both. The second half of the introduction

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<sup>15</sup> William Wetmore Story, *Poems* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1856), p. 260.

describes how the artistic exchanges and interactions enabled by Rome in the nineteenth century were imagined and experienced in terms of energy, ideas regarding which, in the scientific community, were evolving and gaining higher profile as the controversial field of thermodynamics emerged.

Both the idea and the lived experience of the city provided unique conditions for the creation and exchange of art and ideas by expatriate artists. As Story's poem indicates, Rome's reputation as exceptional was firmly in place by the period of this study. Duncan F. Kennedy notes that, 'Rome has been seen as the destination *par excellence*, and all roads proverbially lead there. The entry under *voyage* in the French *Encyclopédie* of 1765 observes that one makes a journey to Paris, but one makes *the* journey to Italy; it is definitive.'<sup>16</sup> A century later, Kennedy notes, one of Rome's chief attractions to foreign visitors was its reputation, above and beyond its reality: '[t]he fervor expressed by travellers to Rome like Goethe or Henry James is one of desire and expectation fulfilled, presented to us at least in part intellectual, and figured as *recognition* as much as *cognition*' (19). The Romantic legacy added to the already established understanding of Rome as a city of art and inspiration, and one that represented a cultural pinnacle.

Visitors projected various, often conflicting, ideas both of the city and themselves, onto Rome. Catharine Edwards describes how 'Rome's seemingly boundless capacity for multiple, indeed conflicting, signification makes it an extraordinarily fertile paradigm for making sense of—and also for destabilising—history, politics, identity, memory and desire.'<sup>17</sup> Expatriate artists of the mid century exploited the paradox identified by Edwards: the unique conditions the city provided, and which are outlined below, mapped onto their own questions of 'history, politics, identity, memory and desire,' and enabled them to produce artworks that both derived from and fed into the idea of Rome as an artistic resource.

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<sup>16</sup> Duncan F. Kennedy, 'A sense of place: Rome, history and empire revisited' in *Roman Presences: Receptions of Rome in European Culture, 1789-1945*, ed. by Catharine Edwards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 19-34 (p. 19). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>17</sup> Catharine Edwards, 'Introduction' in *Roman Presences: Receptions of Rome in European Culture, 1789-1945*, pp. 1-18 (p. 3). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

Nathaniel Hawthorne argued that though, ‘there is clay everywhere, and marble enough, and heads to model,’ it was ‘the peculiar mode of life, more than the artistic advantages which Rome offers’ that drew expatriate artists (*Notebooks*, 78). This ‘peculiar mode of life’ involved an international mix of artists and writers (predominantly British and American by the mid century) who worked and socialised together, often independently of local Roman society. In 1847, *The Roman Advertiser* reported the number of American artists living in the city to be four.<sup>18</sup> Though this number grew to ten in the winter, and would rise rapidly in the following years to reach just under 400 by the winter of 1859, the earlier American expatriates who arrived mid century joined an English-speaking community that was predominantly made up of British artists.<sup>19</sup> They moved into a traditionally British neighbourhood, the Pincian Hill, where there were banks that handled dollars and pounds, businesses operating in English, tea rooms, English-language bookshops that stocked literature and periodicals imported from Boston, New York and London (Seidler, 21). Hotels including the Hotel d’Angleterre, Hotel de Londres and the Hotel d’Europe accommodated many of the international visitors. Story lived in this area for over a decade before moving to the Palazzo Barberini. The burgeoning community of American artists attached itself to and was founded on a British one.

Expatriates had both formal and informal meeting places in the city. The Café Greco on the Via Condotti, frequented by Washington Allston and Benjamin West during their stays earlier in the century, remained the ‘headquarters’ of expatriate artistic life.<sup>20</sup> There were a number of clubs and organizations established to support foreign artists: the Society for the Promotion of Fine Arts regularly exhibited expatriates’ work in the Piazza del Popolo, charging members twenty cents a month. In 1870, this society merged with the International Society of Artists in Rome, creating a total membership of three hundred. Less formal groups, such as the American club, which met at the Palazzo Gregori, and regular social events in apartments and studios, including Emelyn Story’s weekly ‘afternoons’ on Fridays, helped to consolidate relationships (Seidler, 219). So significant was the artistic community to Hawthorne that he dismissed, in his *Notebooks*, Rome’s other appeals

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<sup>18</sup> *The Roman Advertiser: A Journal of Science, Literature and Fine Arts*, 6 Feb 1847, p. 124.

<sup>19</sup> William L. Vance, *America’s Rome*, Vol. 2, p. 269.

<sup>20</sup> Alexander Innes Shand, *Old Time Travel* (London: John Murray, 1903), p. 31.



to artists (which are nonetheless outlined below): ‘There is clay elsewhere, and marble enough, and heads to model, and ideas may be made sensible objects at home as well as here’. Rather, in Rome, artists ‘keep each other warm by the presence of so many of them’ (78).

Just as each new artist arriving in Rome was following in the footsteps of those artists alongside whom they would work and socialize in the city, they were also self-consciously mimicking the journeys made by their Romantic predecessors. In this way, they participated in an already-established pattern, in which each generation of visitors to Rome cited the reputation of the city created by earlier artists as part of the reason for its appeal. For visitors in the nineteenth century, Rome was a city in large part defined by the Romantics. For the Romantics themselves, the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo allowed them an access to Italy that had been impossible during the previous twenty years, and enabled first-hand encounters with a landscape that had been evoked by artists such as Poussin and Richard Wilson. ‘The British flooded into Italy,’ notes Maureen McCue. ‘When the war finally ended [...] Italian culture was no longer the province of a select few.’<sup>21</sup>

The idea of the ‘Eternal city’ is one that suggests this perpetual, self-conscious referencing of antecedence; the city has always been there, and thus each generation is building on the work of their forerunners. Though the traditional idea of the Grand Tour was in decline by the mid-nineteenth century, the legacy of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century journey played a key role in establishing Rome’s reputation as a unique destination. Catharine Edwards describes Rome as ‘culmination of the aristocratic Grand Tour’, noting that, ‘[d]espite the romantic tendency to eschew urban life for wild nature, Rome as the city of ruins was a favourite destination for the romantic traveler’ (17). ‘Only one city escaped the judgement of Romanticism,’ writes Jerome J. McGann, ‘and that was Rome. [...] Rome would receive the investments of Romantic ideology to an extent that was not possible for any other city, not even Venice.’<sup>22</sup> Richard Wrigley notes that while for the Romantics, Rome

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<sup>21</sup> Maureen McCue, *British Romanticism and the Reception of Italian Old Master Art, 1793-1840* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 2. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>22</sup> Jerome J. McGann, *The Beauty of Inflections: Literary Investigations in Historical Method and Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp. 313-4.

was ‘the preordained climax of an Italian journey’ and ‘the quintessential Romantic city’,<sup>23</sup> ‘the allure of the city in the nineteenth century remained undiminished’.<sup>24</sup>

Expatriate artists experienced Italy through the lens of Romantic texts about the country. As Story notes in *Roba di Roma*, ‘[e]very Englishman [in Rome] has a Murray for information and a Byron for sentiment’; the city was thus experienced by mid-century within a Romantic frame.<sup>25</sup> ‘Italy had been ‘a privileged ground for the emerging romantic sensibility and the preferred setting for a “poetry of ruins” that reached its climax in the early decades of the nineteenth century in poets like Byron and [Percy Bysshe] Shelley’, writes Carolyn Springer.<sup>26</sup> Canto IV of Byron’s *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* (1812-1818) and Goethe’s *Italienisch Reise* (1816) framed Rome as the ‘city of the soul’ of artists and Western civilization;<sup>27</sup> for Shelley it was the ‘Capital of the World’.<sup>28</sup> Jonathan Sachs identifies ‘the centrality of ancient Rome for Byron’s sense of self, for his understanding of literary history and his place within it’ and notes that in Shelley’s writing on Rome there is a ‘sense of the eternal value of classical culture’ despite ‘his association of Rome with despotism’.<sup>29</sup> Keats’ grave was in the Protestant cemetery. J. M. W. Turner made an extended visit, and provided illustrations to Byron’s writings and to Samuel Rogers’ *Italy: A Poem* (1822).<sup>30</sup> The sense of artistic connection and heritage in Rome was deemed so important by the American painter John Vanderlyn (1775-1852) that he described meetings taking

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<sup>23</sup> Richard Wrigley, *Roman Fever: Influence, Infection, and the Image of Rome, 1700-1870* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), p. 1. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>24</sup> Richard Wrigley, ‘Introduction,’ to *Regarding Romantic Rome*, ed. by Richard Wrigley (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. 9-16 (p. 9).

<sup>25</sup> William Wetmore Story, *Roba di Roma* (Boston: Houghton and Mifflin, 1887), pp. 6-7. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text as ‘*Roba*’.

<sup>26</sup> Caroline Springer, *The Marble Wilderness: Ruins and Representation in Italian Romanticism, 1775-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 1. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>27</sup> George Gordon Byron, *Lord Byron, The Major Works*, ed. by Jerome J. McGann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) p. 170. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>28</sup> Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, Vol. 2, ed. by Frederick L. Jones (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 87.

<sup>29</sup> Jonathan Sachs, *Romantic Antiquity, Rome in the British Imagination, 1789-1832* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 116, p. 153.

<sup>30</sup> Adele Holcomb, ‘Turner and Rogers’ “Italy” revisited’, *Studies in Romanticism*, 27, No. 1 (1988), pp. 63-95 (p. 64).

place in Rome in 1805 between himself, Allston, Turner, Fenimore Cooper, Thorwaldsen, Flaxman, Shelley, Byron and Keats. Byron, the earliest of the three poets to reach Rome, arrived in 1817; Fenimore Cooper in 1829 (Earnest, 96). So powerfully was Rome associated with these Romantic figures that by the end of his life Vanderlyn could argue that he did, in fact, encounter them in Rome, emotionally and artistically if not literally.

Rome was established, on both sides of the Atlantic, as the artistic training ground in which masterpieces were created and on which careers were founded. For American artists, the significance of Rome as a site of profound artistic heritage was heightened by the comparative lack of an artistic tradition in their homeland, and a lack of both educational and practical facilities for young artists in America. By the mid century, debate around the creation of 'American art' and appropriate ways for American artists to train themselves and contribute was ongoing, and a pattern had emerged of young American artists travelling to Rome. Of Harriet Hosmer's departure for Rome in 1852, Maria Mitchell wrote: 'When Hosmer knew herself to be a sculptor, she knew also that in America was no school for her. She must leave home, she must live where art could live.'<sup>31</sup> The Bostonian painter Washington Allston (1779-1843), who, William Wetmore Story had admired and visited as an undergraduate, had lived in Rome between 1804 and 1808, and produced work inspired by Italy, notably two 'Italian Landscapes' (1814 and 1828-30) in subsequent decades.<sup>32</sup> Story wrote passionately about the negative effects of Boston life on Allston's artistic temperament, arguing that he, 'starved spiritually in Cambridgeport' and describing, 'so rich and beautiful a nature, in whose veins the south ran warm [...] stunted on the scant soil and withered by the cold winds of fearful Cambridgeport.'<sup>33</sup> Ernest Earnest describes how, for younger Americans, 'Washington Allston became a kind of symbol of what America did to the artist' (95). Allston's Roman excursion thus offered the artists of Story's generation a model for becoming a successful American artist that involved a prolonged stay in Rome.

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<sup>31</sup> Maria Mitchell, *Life, Letters and Journals, Compiled by Phebe Mitchell Kendall* (Boston: Lee and Shepard Publishers, 1896), p. 149. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>32</sup> William L. Vance, Vol. 2, p. 196.

<sup>33</sup> Earnest, p. 95.

Following this example, Horatio Greenough moved to Rome in 1825, Thomas Crawford in 1835, and Story in 1847.<sup>34</sup>

The growing sense of the significance of training in Rome to the young American artist corresponded with developments in travel technologies that radically decreased the cost and time involved in travel from America to Europe. Patricia Pulham notes that ‘American visits to Rome rose considerably in the nineteenth century, increasing from approximately two hundred in 1835, and a thousand in 1840, to thirty thousand by 1900.’<sup>35</sup> Steam packets improved in ‘safety, speed, and convenient schedules’ to such a degree that Italy became a far more accessible destination for moderately well-off Americans than ever previously.<sup>36</sup> Emerson observed, by 1860, that his ‘countrymen are infatuated with the rococo toy of Italy. All America seems on the point of embarking for Europe.’<sup>37</sup> Leonard Buonomo identifies the simultaneous accessibility and foreignness of Rome as key to its appeal, describing it as ‘a readily accessible and not too disquieting Orient’.<sup>38</sup> While other destinations offered some of the same attractions as Rome—the Middle East’s archaeological digs, for example—these remained prohibitively difficult to reach for the American traveller. Rome, on the other hand, was a tantalising combination of strangeness and familiarity, as increasingly the city catered to the precise needs of foreign visitors. In Rome, visitors encountered a foreign landscape and climate while being welcomed by an increasingly established Anglo-American community that frequented English-speaking cafes, banked in British and American currency, and had easy lines of communication with their homelands.

‘Rome is the only place in the world fit for a young sculptor to commence his career in,’ wrote Thomas Crawford, a decade before Story arrived in Italy. ‘Here he will find everything he can possibly require for his studio; he lives among artists, and every step he takes in the garden of the arts presents something which assists him in

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<sup>34</sup> Seidler, p. 109, p. 141, p. x.

<sup>35</sup> Patricia Pulham, “‘Of marble men and maidens’: Sin, Sculpture, and Perversion in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “The Marble Faun”,’ *The Yearbook of English Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 1/2, *The Arts in Victorian Literature* (2010), pp. 83-102 (p. 84). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>36</sup> Seidler, p. 151.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>38</sup> Leonardo Buonomo, *Backward Glances: Exploring Italy, Reinterpreting America (1831-1866)* (Madison: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996), p. 15.

the formation of his taste.’<sup>39</sup> When Story’s father died in 1845, Story only accepted a commission to produce a memorial statue ‘on the condition that I come abroad first and see what had been done in art.’<sup>40</sup> There were no art schools in America offering formal training for sculptors; the only opportunity for learning was ‘by apprenticing oneself to a craftsman who worked with stone, wood, or plaster in an ornamental manner.’<sup>41</sup> By contrast, Rome was long established as a training ground for sculptors: it offered both formal training in the form of tuition at art schools or apprenticeship at the studio of senior sculptor, affordable marble of high quality, inspiration in the vast collections of the city’s museums and galleries, and the support of a community of like-minded individuals. Rome’s schools of art, notably the French Academy and the Academy of Saint Luke, offered lectures and classes open to foreign students; Thomas Crawford and Randolph Rogers were themselves faculty members of the Academy of Saint Luke.<sup>42</sup> In addition, sculpture was taught to apprentices in studios of established artists. Younger sculptors commonly learned their craft in this way: American sculptor Harriet Hosmer, for example, worked in the studio of the English John Gibson. The vision of Rome as a training ground was not limited to American artists; Gibson himself reported being told to study in Rome, ‘the great University of sculpture’.<sup>43</sup>

Rome offered, beyond educational resources, both materials and models essential to the practice of art, and in particular sculpture. In America, supply of marble of adequate quality was limited: ‘stone extracted from those few native quarries that were operational before 1840 was too pitted, soft, and discoloured to yield the subtle surface textures, delicate carving details and purity of hue required of art sculpture.’<sup>44</sup> In Rome, supplies were both of better quality and cheaper to obtain: Hawthorne reported in *The Marble Faun* that ‘white limestone from Carrara, cut into convenient blocks, [was] worth, in that state, about two or three dollars per pound’ (105-6).

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<sup>39</sup> Thomas Crawford to Robert Launitz, 27 June 1837, quoted by Robert Launitz in ‘Reminiscences of Thomas Crawford,’ *The Crayon* 6, Part I (1859), p. 28.

<sup>40</sup> Story to Enrico Nencioni, quoted in Seidler, p. 21

<sup>41</sup> Seidler, p. 93.

<sup>42</sup> Seidler, p. 174.

<sup>43</sup> Thomas Matthews, *The Biography of John Gibson R. A., Sculptor* (London: William Pieinemann, 1911), pp. 28-9. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>44</sup> Seidler, p. 93.

Similarly, the city fostered ‘a professional class of sculptors’ models conversant with the poses and expressions typically demanded by sculptors’.<sup>45</sup> These models gathered daily on the Spanish Steps, organising themselves by the figure they specialized in representing: ‘all day long, these steps are flooded with sunshine, in which, stretched at length, or gathered in picturesque groups, models of every age and both sexes bask away the hours when they are free from employment in the studios.’<sup>46</sup> Margaret Fuller, in 1849, reported that the daily fee for a sculptor’s model was one dollar.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, the cost of living in Italy was markedly cheaper than in both America and Britain. This made it an attractive destination for artists operating without the luxury of substantial private funds. When Story rented a twenty-room apartment in the Palazzo Barberini, he reported that he paid Prince Fillippi Barberini ‘\$250 less than the rent we receive from our little house in Bussey Place [in Boston]’.<sup>48</sup>

Rome offered another resource that was particularly valuable to American artists. Henry P. Leland’s novel *Americans in Rome* (1863) describes Rome as America’s ‘direct antithesis. She is all of the past, and full of lessons.’<sup>49</sup> In the words of James Russell Lowell, ‘Italy gave cheaply what gold cannot buy for [the American] at home; a Past at once legendary and authentic, and in which he has an equal claim with every other foreigner.’<sup>50</sup> Leon Edel, describing Henry James’ delight upon first reaching Rome, notes that ‘the romantic spirit was strong in him, and to be in Rome was to visit History itself, to feel not only his own passion at the moment but the passions of the centuries’.<sup>51</sup> Like marble and artists’ models, history was plentiful and accessible in Rome, and as Edel expresses in his depiction of James, young American

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<sup>45</sup> Seidler, 180.

<sup>46</sup> Story, *Roba di Roma*, p. 40.

<sup>47</sup> Margaret Fuller, *At Home and Abroad*, ed. by Arthur B. Fuller (Boston: Crosby, Nichols & Co., 1856), pp. 375-377. Fuller estimated this fee in a dispatch to the New York Tribune on 20 March 1849.

<sup>48</sup> William Story to Charles Eliot Norton, Letter, 21 May 1857, Document No. 7209, Charles Eliot Norton Papers, circa 1845-1908 (MS Am 1088, MS Am 1088.14), Houghton Library, Harvard University [hereafter ‘Charles Eliot Norton Papers’].

<sup>49</sup> Henry P. Leland, *Americans in Rome* (New York: Charles T. Evans, 1863), p. 3.

<sup>50</sup> James Russell Lowell, ‘Fireside Travels,’ *The Complete Writings of James Russell Lowell*, Vol. 1 (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1940), p. 148.

<sup>51</sup> Leon Edel, quoted in Catherine Edwards, *Roman Presences*, p. 20.

artists felt able to access Rome's history, particularly its artistic past and the legacy of the Romantics', and relate it to their own identities as artists.

Richard Wrigley describes, 'Rome's credentials as the home of ancient grandeur reduced to picturesque ruination' as 'unassailable, albeit that Naples, Pompeii and Herculaneum had a seductive southern pull' (1). For Catharine Edwards, 'Rome has often served as the embodiment of time—a place where the survivals of different historical eras are visibly layered upon one another. As the eternal city, it has also been made to stand for the transcendence of time.'<sup>52</sup> The seductive antiquity of Rome was identified by Goethe as the city's greatest defining characteristic: 'the entire history of the world is linked up with this city'; 'It is history, above all, that one reads quite differently here from anywhere else in the world. Everywhere else one starts from the outside and works inward; here it seems to be the other way around.'<sup>53</sup> Byron's *Childe Harold* expresses a similar sentiment: 'When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall; / And when Rome fall—the World' (189).

Just as the city's artistic reputation was one of endless inter-generational repetition, so too, was its historic one. Catharine Edwards outlines the city's continuous, lengthy claim to historic significance:

What did (and does) Rome stand for? The high culture of Cicero and Virgil [...] ? The resolute republican heroism of Horatius defending the bridge [...] ? Or perhaps the pernicious decadence of the emperors Nero and Heliogabalus—a terrible warning of the consequences of tyranny—or even of empire itself? And we cannot forget that other Rome, the city of St Paul and St Peter. [...] For Christendom, stretching out from the eternal city, has served only to reinforce the old association of Rome with empire.<sup>54</sup>

Evidence of the city's extensive historical significance was everywhere—so ubiquitous in fact that visitors frequently reported feeling overwhelmed and exhausted by it. Archaeological digs in the city were frequent, drawing on advances in technologies supporting both archaeology and geology. Local and foreign historians, antiquarians and archaeologists, amateurs and professionals alike, became involved

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<sup>52</sup> Edwards, p. 6.

<sup>53</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Italian Journey*, trans. by W. H. Auden and Elizabeth Meyer (London: Penguin 1970), p. 154. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>54</sup> Edwards, p. 3.

in the process of unearthing Rome's history and bringing to light ever increasing numbers of ancient artefacts. In 1846, George William Curtis described Rome as 'a vast university endowed by the Past with choicest treasures of Art to which come crowds from all nations, as lovers and dreamers and students, who may be won to live among relics so dear.'<sup>55</sup> Robert K. Martin and Leland S. Person suggest that, 'Rome offered a new and more complex sense of history, one that was deeply layered and palimpsestic, not subject to easy rational analysis.'<sup>56</sup> Rome's resistance to 'easy rational analysis' further heightened the appeal of the city to artists, who supplied artworks to fill the perceived gap in 'rational' understanding about the city's history. The tension between the desire to know and the desire to imagine proved fruitful, informing narratives that explore motifs of discovery on many levels: archaeological, historical, psychological and sexual.

Rome's status as an independent city-state prior to the unification of Italy in 1871 supported the expatriate artists' view of the city's exceptionalism, and an idea of Rome as shut off, not only from the surrounding country, but also from negative effects of modernity they perceived in their industrialised homelands. 'The time is not far distant,' wrote Charles Weld, 'when the small link wanting to connect [Rome] by railways with other European cities will be supplied. Then a journey to the City of the Caesars from England will be but a short holiday trip, to be reckoned by hours instead of days.' This fantasy was both politically optimistic—'And who knows that, when this is accomplished, Rome may not be free'<sup>57</sup>—and artistically alarming: Story worried that 'with the entrance of liberty, the old picturesque customs and costumes that gave so peculiar a charm to Rome' might be 'driven out'.<sup>58</sup> The city walls of Rome were therefore a significant symbol of its protected and/or oppressed state.

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<sup>55</sup> George William Curtis, *Early Letters of George William Curtis to John Sullivan Dwight*, ed. by George W. Cooke (New York: Harper Brothers, 1898), p. 261.

<sup>56</sup> Robert K. Martin and Leland S. Person, 'Introduction', *Roman Holidays: American Writers and Artists in Nineteenth Century Italy* (Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 2002), p. 2. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>57</sup> Charles Richard Weld, *Last Winter in Rome* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, 1865), p. 208. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>58</sup> Story, *Roba di Roma*, 'Preface to the sixth edition' (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1887), p. vii.



Dickens, looking back at Rome from Albano, describes the Campagna's 'dark, undulating surface' as 'like a broad, dull Lethe flowing round the walls of Rome, and separating it from all the world!'<sup>59</sup> Weld notes that it was possible to walk the circumference of the city in 'four hours and eleven minutes' and thus calculated that 'the circuit [was] a little over twelve miles.'

[T]his, I believe, approximates very closely to their present extent. It is remarkable how nearly this measurement agrees with the circuit of the walls erected by the successor of Romulus. These are stated to have been about thirteen miles, a vast enclosure for an infant city, as Gibbon observes; but, as he adds, necessary. (Weld, 161-2)

Rome's 'necessary' walls provided an obvious metaphor for the city as exceptional, and, for the time being at least, removed from the rest of the world. Hosmer's description of her arrival in the city was couched in these terms: 'You entered its gates, they closed behind you and the nineteenth century disappeared from view. You entered upon a sphere purely ideal – the ideal of the scholar, the poet and the artist.'<sup>60</sup> The walled city was preserved in the eyes of the expatriate artists as a uniquely artistic realm.

Rome was a 'fairly precinct', wrote Nathaniel Hawthorne (*Marble Faun*, 4); for Byron it was simultaneously a country and a city ('my country! city of the soul!' (170)). Living within the city walls of Rome was to live in the 'Land of Art' in *The Marble Faun* (102), the 'garden of the arts' for Crawford.<sup>61</sup> Counter-intuitively, then, the politics of the Risorgimento and the ongoing conflict around the unification of Italy led to a situation in which expatriate artists in Rome were largely able to ignore political realities, and instead focus on matters purely aesthetic and artistic. Martin and Person explore the idea of the 'moral holiday', a term originally coined by Carl Maves, in their writing on expatriates in Rome (2). George Eliot argued that, 'on a first journey to the greatest centres of art, one must be excused for letting one's public

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<sup>59</sup> Charles Dickens, *Pictures from Italy, American Notes* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1868), p. 216. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>60</sup> Hosmer, quoted in Alicia Faxon, 'Images of Women in the Sculpture of Harriet Hosmer', *Woman's Art Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1981), pp. 25-29 (p. 25).

<sup>61</sup> Crawford to Robert Launitz, 27 June 1837, quoted by Robert Launitz, p. 28.

spirit go to sleep a little'.<sup>62</sup> Charles Eliot Norton finds that the 'Italy which is the home of the imagination [...] becomes the Italy of memory';<sup>63</sup> a formulation that overlooks, or even ignores, the Italy of (political) reality. In *Notes from Over Sea* (1845), John Mitchell wrote that 'The Rome that *is* seemed but an intruder [...] as impertinent a thing within these precincts as a street of workshops would be among the cypresses and yews of an ancient cemetery. I wished it away.'<sup>64</sup> 'The love of Rome,' for Henry James, was 'the love of the status quo'.<sup>65</sup> This is notably illustrated by the attitude of John Gibson who, Elizabeth Anne McCauley notes, complained 'that "during the turbulent times we could not pursue our labours so comfortably" [...] and preserved his faith in law and order under a paternalistic papacy.'<sup>66</sup> With notable exceptions, such as Margaret Fuller, whose journalism covered Italian politics, Thomas Crawford, who volunteered to fight for the civic guard defending the city during the 1848 Siege of Rome, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who engaged with the politics of the Risorgimento (predominantly from Florence), most famously in *Casa Guidi Windows*, many artists in Rome entered instead into the spirit of the 'moral holiday', choosing to experience Italy as the artistic antithesis to the political realities of their homelands. This political indifference of expatriates in Rome is in stark contrast to the rigorous political engagement identified by Alison Chapman of a group of expatriate female writers in Florence, which included Barrett Browning. Chapman argues that '[t]hrough engagement with their adopted nation's revolutionary turmoil,

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<sup>62</sup> George Eliot, quoted in Andrew Thompson, *George Eliot and Italy: Literary, Cultural and Political Influences from Dante to the Risorgimento* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), p. 45.

<sup>63</sup> Charles Eliot Norton, *Notes of Travel and Study in Italy* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1859), p. 2. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>64</sup> John Mitchell, *Notes From Over Sea*, Vol. 2 (New York: Gates & Stedman, 1845), p. 258.

<sup>65</sup> Henry James, *Transatlantic Sketches* (Boston: James R. Osgood, 1875), p. 129. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>66</sup> Elizabeth Anne McCauley, 'Fawning over Marbles: Robert and Gerardine Macpherson's *Vatican Sculptures* and the Role of Photographs in the Reception of the Antique', in *Art and the Early Photographic Album*, ed. by Stephen Bann (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 91-122 (p. 98).

the women poets [...] offer, however contested, other *risorgimenti*: revolutions of poetry and the very act of writing.’<sup>67</sup>

Story, though professing an interest in Italian politics and remaining in the city during the Siege of Rome, unlike many of his compatriots, engaged with political events through an artistic lens that necessitated detachment: from the safe distance of the Roman ramparts he produced a series of sketches of the conflict. Henry James would later compare the expatriate engagement with the siege to that of an opera audience with a performance in *William Wetmore Story and His Friends*:

They arrive in time to place themselves well, as it were, for the drama, to get seated and settled before it begins [...] The flight of the Pontiff, the tocsin and the cannon, the invading army, the wounded and dying, the wild rumours, the flaring nights, the battered walls, were all so much grist to the mill of an artistic, a poetic nature, curious of character, history, aspects. (1: 108)

In this depiction, James echoes Arthur Hugh Clough’s portrayal of expatriate engagement with Italian political unrest in *Amours de Voyage* (1862), in which the ‘English, Germans, Americans, French [...] stand and stare’ from the Pincian Hill at the battle below:<sup>68</sup> ‘there is something repellant in the utterly touristic manner with which Claude treats matters of life and death’, observes Kenneth Churchill.<sup>69</sup> Though Story’s artistic engagement with the siege demonstrated a greater interest in Italian politics than that held by the majority of the city’s expatriate artists, who vacated Rome for its duration and regarded it as an ‘annoying inconvenience’,<sup>70</sup> his primary

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<sup>67</sup> Alison Chapman, *Networking the Nation: British and American Women’s Poetry and Italy, 1840-1870* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. xl. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text. See Annamaria Formichella Elsdén’s *Roman Fever: Domesticity and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century American Women’s Writing* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2008), for details of the enthusiasm with which some expatriate women engaged with Italian political debate, and the unique significance this writing has within the context of their ‘feminist projects.’ Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>68</sup> Arthur Hugh Clough, *Amours de Voyage*, ed. by Patrick Scott (Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1974), p. 14. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>69</sup> Kenneth Churchill, *Italy and English Literature, 1764-1930* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993) p. 105.

<sup>70</sup> Seidler, p. 228.

interest in it was motivated by art rather than politics: in the ‘land of art’, even political conflicts such as the siege were converted by Story into works of art.

Although expatriates tended to view Italian politics from a polite distance and/or through an artistic lens, the idea of Rome, both ancient and modern, and the nineteenth-century debate around Italian nationhood and national identity, proved a stimulus for their own questions of a similar nature. Catherine Edwards describes Rome as ‘a model familiar to all educated persons yet distant enough in time to allow a latitude of interpretation. [...] Rome could offer examples of republican (as well as autocratic) government’.<sup>71</sup> She notes that both Italian nationalists and foreigners sought to ‘appropriate the remains of Roman antiquity for their own cause’ and that

ancient Rome has been used to articulate national identities in Britain, France and Germany also. Here too one may trace a profound tension between different uses of Rome—in this case between Rome’s association with particular national characteristics (Roman in opposition to Carthaginian, Greek or barbarian) and Rome’s association with the law, language and culture held in common by diverse peoples.<sup>72</sup>

For Americans, who were observing from afar their nation move towards the civil war of 1861, Rome in the mid century, both the idea of ancient Rome and the modern reality of a city state negotiating its identity within a new nation, provided a useful backdrop to their own thinking about American politics. For British artists, Rome’s history offered a context for considering the imperial ambitions of their homeland. In both these cases, however, the pattern of expatriate engagement with Italian politics is similar to that of their interaction with art in Rome, discussed below: it is one of access for their own artistic and intellectual purposes.

While the expatriate artistic community of mid-century Rome was made up of both British and American artists, who brought with them different sets of associations with Rome but also many shared perspectives on the artwork they sought to make in the city, within both groups was another subset of artists who had a unique experience of the city. Female artists came to Rome to work alongside their male counterparts and enjoy unprecedented freedoms to move, live, travel and make art

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<sup>71</sup> Edwards, p. 9.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

independently. Lisa E. Farrington finds that Italy offered ‘substantial relief from the social strictures of American provincial society’;<sup>73</sup> Hawthorne described ‘the peculiar mode of life’ in the city, ‘and its freedom from the enthrallments of society’ (*Notebooks*, 78). This ‘freedom’ was of particular significance to women: ‘Italy became a utopian space for women,’ write Alison Chapman and Jane Stabler; it ‘offered the prospect of independent life outside the confines of the northern domestic sphere.’<sup>74</sup> This relief was portrayed by Nathaniel Hawthorne in his depiction of Hilda in *The Marble Faun* as ‘an example of the freedom of life which it is possible for a female artist to enjoy at Rome’ (44). In offering this description, Hawthorne identifies the exceptional circumstances of female freedom afforded by the city. Hilda is

free to descend into the corrupted atmosphere of the city beneath [...] all alone, perfectly independent, under her own sole guardianship [...]. The customs of artist life bestow such liberty upon the sex, which is elsewhere restricted within so much narrower limits. (44)

Critics have argued that Hilda was modelled on both Harriet Hosmer and Louisa Lander.<sup>75</sup> Peabody Hawthorne, herself a copyist like Hilda, could equally have informed the portrait.<sup>76</sup> The number of different potential sources for Hilda is indicative of the large number of women in Rome who were perceived as enjoying Hilda’s liberated yet ‘pure’ lifestyle; Hilda could therefore have been modelled on any one of them. Female artists, most famously Hosmer, lived independently and forged successful careers in the city. Hosmer, writes Robert K. Martin, was ‘the protégée of actress Charlotte Cushman. The two women [...] established a “cozy ménage” with several other women, leading to Story’s somewhat homophobic mot,

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<sup>73</sup> Lisa E. Farrington, *Review: ‘The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth Century America’ by Charmaine Nelson*, *Woman’s Art Journal*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 2009), pp. 42-44 (p. 42).

<sup>74</sup> Alison Chapman and Jane Stabler, ‘Introduction’, *Unfolding the South: Nineteenth-century British women writers and artists in Italy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 1-15 (p. 4). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>75</sup> See John Carlos Rowe, ‘Hawthorne’s ghost in James’s Italy: Sculptural form, romantic narrative, and the function of sexuality in the marble faun, “Adina”, and William Wetmore Story and his Friends’, in *Roman Holidays*, pp. 73-106, p. 87.

<sup>76</sup> See Annamaria Formichella Elsdén, *Roman Fever*, p. 72.

calling the group the “harem (scarem)”.’<sup>77</sup> This ‘harem (scarem)’, also dubbed the ‘white Marmorean flock’ by James in his biography of Story, openly enjoyed these freedoms and were frequently commented upon by visitors. Story described them as ‘emancipated females’ and wrote to Lowell of Hosmer’s behaviour: ‘Hatty takes a high hand here with Rome, and would have the Romans know that a Yankee girl can do anything she pleases, walk alone, ride her horse alone, and laugh at their rules.’<sup>78</sup> Elizabeth Barrett Browning also found Hosmer’s lifestyle in Rome remarkable, writing that she ‘emancipates the eccentric life of a perfectly emancipated woman by the perfect purity of hers. [...] She lives here all alone (at twenty-two); dines and breakfasts at the cafes precisely as a young man would; works at 6 o’clock in the morning till night, as a great artist must.’<sup>79</sup>

The presence of independent women working as artists and supporting themselves broadened the capacity of exchange and influence. The fact that Rome offered freedoms for women attracted female artists who otherwise would not have been present to contribute to artistic culture in the city, notably Hosmer and Edmonia Lewis. Hosmer’s work proved influential to Hawthorne’s writing and several male sculptors.<sup>80</sup> Rome was, therefore, not only a place where ideas and inspiration could cross boundaries of nation and time, but also of gender. Rome functioned, in these ways, as a powerful site of artistic exchange enabled by and enabling convergences and conversations between British and American artists, between nineteenth-century artists and the historical artists whose works they encountered in Rome, between men and women, and between different genres of artworks. It was a site of cross-pollination.

Previous studies of the period have tended to separate members of the expatriate community by nationality, and often also gender. William L. Vance’s *America’s Rome* (1989), Robert K. Martin and Leland S. Person’s *Roman Holidays: American Writers and Artists in Nineteenth-Century Italy* (2002), Ernest Earnest’s

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<sup>77</sup> Robert K. Martin, ‘An Awful Freedom: Hawthorne and the Anxieties of the Carnival’, in *Roman Holidays*, pp. 28-40 (p. 36). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>78</sup> Story quoted in James, *William Wetmore Story and His Friends*, p. 266.

<sup>79</sup> Elizabeth Barrett Browning to Mary Russell Mitford, 10th May 1854, quoted in Dolly Sherwood, *Harriet Hosmer: American Sculptor (1830-1908)* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991), p. 97.

<sup>80</sup> See John Carlos Rowe, ‘Hawthorne’s Ghost’ in *Roman Holidays*, pp. 76-7.

*Expatriates and Patriots* (1968) and Annamaria Formichella Eldsen's *Roman Fever: Domesticity and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century American Women's Writing* (2008) have explored the American experience. Jane Stabler's *The Artistry of Exile: Romantic and Victorian Writers in Italy* (2013), Kenneth Churchill's *Italy and English Literature, 1764-1930* (1980), Michael Hollington and John Jordan's *Imagining Italy: Victorian Writers and Travellers* (2010) and Alison Chapman and Jane Stabler's *Unfolding the South: Nineteenth-century British women writers and artists in Italy* (2003) describe the British artist's experience in and response to Italy. Other approaches to the period have focused on a single artistic genre, particularly sculpture, for example Joy Kasson's *Marble Queen's and Captives: Women in Nineteenth-Century American Sculpture* (1990) or William H. Gerdts' *American Neo-classic Sculpture: the Marble Resurrection* (1973). Furthermore, there are many accounts of single artists' experiences in Italy, such as Andrew Thompson's, *George Eliot and Italy* (1998) and Michael Horrington and Francesca Orestano's *Dickens and Italy* (2009). This thesis acknowledges the variety of contexts and differing perspectives that different members of the expatriate community in Rome brought with them, while accepting Richard Wrigley's approach to the city in *Roman Fever* as a 'cultural crossroads' that necessitates the consideration of nationalities in relation to and alongside one another (4). This thesis builds on all of these studies by conceiving of mid-nineteenth-century Rome as a place where the boundaries of nationality, gender and genre are constantly traversed. In this sense, it finds a model in Alison Chapman's *Networking the Nation*, which, though its focus is limited to a single gender, considers Florence during the same period in terms of 'many varieties' of Anglo-American 'expatriate circles' that contained novelists, poets, painters and sculptors. Chapman argues that the city acted as a point of encounter where 'writers and other artists could meet and circulate,' and provided 'platforms for an expatriate writing career' (7-8).

The British and American members of the expatriate community in Rome were so thoroughly integrated with one another that throughout *Roba di Roma*, Story takes pains to define the identity of the expatriate community as Anglo-American: 'Let us be just, however, and admit that we also—we English and Americans—but too often call the Campagna bad names' (325). While artists from other European countries were present in the community, notably Alexis de Tocqueville, Madame Mohl and Hans Christian Andersen, the prevailing culture was Anglo-American, and

the interactions of British and American artists produced artworks that spoke both directly and indirectly to each other.<sup>81</sup> This was a transatlantic dialogue conducted at close range, in which artists such as the American Story and British Robert Browning not only exchanged ideas and produced responses to the same stimuli, but edited each other: Browning provided written notes on Story's poems, which, Frank R. DiFederico and Julia Markus argue, owe their dramatic monologue form to Browning's influence.<sup>82</sup> The collaboration operated across the genres of poetry and sculpture, too: Gertrude Reese Hudson notes that 'Story made a statue of Saul and during his Italian years Browning completed his poem on Saul.'<sup>83</sup> Artistic exchange occurred between British and American artists in the expatriate community even when the artists in question never met: Gaskell and Nathaniel Hawthorne, who passed through the community at different times, exerted profound influence on each other. Hawthorne's influence can be read in Gaskell's *Lois the Witch* (1859), while a story told by Gaskell to the Storys in Rome shapes Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*.<sup>84</sup> In this sense, influence operates in the expatriate community in the mode defined by Richard Wrigley, whose study of malaria and influence in nineteenth-century Rome considers influence to act 'through an ambient, immersive dimension as much as being the result of conscious ambition be that individual or institutional' (*Roman Fever*, 2). The

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<sup>81</sup> See William L. Vance, *America's Rome*, Vol. 2, p. 189 for a longer list.

<sup>82</sup> Frank R. DiFederico and Julia Markus, 'The Influence of Robert Browning on the Art of William Wetmore Story,' p. 64.

<sup>83</sup> Gertrude Reese Hudson, 'Introduction', *Browning to His American Friends* (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1965), pp. 1-20 (p. 7).

<sup>84</sup> Gaskell was proud of her indirect connection to Hawthorne, as Henry James notes: 'After Hawthorne's romance has come out [Gaskell] ... is proud of being able to say to people that she had been acquainted from the first with the statue commemorated. ... "I come in crowing over my having seen the thing even in the clay and describing more fully what everyone is asking about."' Henry James, *William Wetmore Story and His Friends*, Vol. 1, p. 358. While critics including Clare Pettitt and Deborah Wynne have traced the influences and inspiration behind *Lois* to Gaskell's relationship with Charles Eliot Norton, the Atlantic telegraph and to print culture and periodicals respectively, it is also a re-imagining of Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* on a transatlantic scale. See Deborah Wynne, 'Hysteria Repeating Itself: Elizabeth Gaskell's *Lois the Witch*', *Women's Writing*, Vol. 12, Number 1 (2005), 85-97 (p. 86), and Clare Pettitt, 'Time Lag and Elizabeth Gaskell's Transatlantic Imagination,' *Victorian Studies* 54, no. 4 (2012): 599-623 (pp. 600-601). For a discussion of Gaskell's story and its relationship to *The Marble Faun*, see Chapter Two of this thesis.



expatriate artistic community in Rome provided the ‘ambient, immersive dimension’ through which Gaskell and Hawthorne communicated indirectly.

This ‘ambient, immersive dimension’ led to dialogues between and across different media, as well as between disparate artists. The multimedia element of the Story-Browning exchange meant that Browning’s work not only informed Story’s poetry but also his sculpture, the ‘impressions, contacts, ideals’ of which were, according to the James biography, ‘for years the same as Browning’s [...] producing for him—given indeed his difference of mind—very much the same intellectual experience’ (2: 232). Conversely, Browning referred to Story as his ‘master’, studying sculpture in Story’s Roman studio and describing himself as a ‘SCULPTOR & poet’. Robert Browning’s ‘multidisciplinary creative identity’ found itself well accommodated in Rome, where the convergence of British and American artists was mirrored by that of artists working in different genres, and where there were strong artistic heritages for each genre: Greco-Roman classical sculpture, Renaissance paintings, Romantic writing.<sup>85</sup> Just as Rome became a site of transatlantic exchange between artists, so was it a place in which artistic inspiration operated across generic boundaries. Story himself embodied this multimedia fluidity: though known predominantly for his sculpture, he published multiple volumes of poetry, a novel, and several treatises on law as well as his Roman guidebook, *Roba di Roma*. In Story’s *Conversations in a Studio* (1890), the character Mallet, a sculptor, describes how, ‘In the ancient days, as well as at the period of the Renaissance, the great artists were accomplished in various branches of art, and did not confine themselves to one.’<sup>86</sup> Responding to an interview question about whether his passions lay more in writing or sculpture, responds: ‘I love ’em both; I can put my whole heart into either of them. [...] I love both my occupations and they are both play to me.’<sup>87</sup> Julian Hawthorne

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<sup>85</sup> Vicky Greenaway, ‘Robert Browning, “SCULPTOR & poet”’. 19: *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*. 2016(22). DOI: <http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.759> [accessed September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016].

<sup>86</sup> William Wetmore Story, *Conversations in a Studio* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1890), p. 141. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>87</sup> ‘Art Notes’, *The Sydney Mail*, 26 January 1878, p. 5.

believed that Story, ‘had the ambition to make marble speak not its own language merely but those of painting and of poetry likewise.’<sup>88</sup>

This ideal of the ‘Renaissance’ artist, whose inspiration informed works of various genres, operated against a parallel aesthetic theory, identified by Alex Potts as originating in eighteenth century with Lessing’s *Laocoon* that ‘engaged in a systematic enquiry into the differences and affinities between various forms of art.’<sup>89</sup> Lessing argued that the difference between painting and poetry was in ‘the one using forms and colors in space,’ and ‘the other articulat[ing] sounds in time’.<sup>90</sup> Potts writes that this ‘was later developed to define a systematic distinction within visual art between sculpture and painting’ (2): ‘sculpture differed from painting because it existed as an abstract ideal of formal purity’ (25). Joshua Reynolds, Potts notes, describes the art of sculpture as ‘not unlike that of Dancing, where the attention of the spectator is principally engaged by the attitude and action of the performed, and it is there he must look for whatever expression that art is capable of exhibiting’ (25). While this debate was present in Rome, as is evidenced by the conversations between the principle characters of *The Marble Faun* regarding the relative merits of their various arts, the Roman context of convergence and mutability led to a parallel experience of art of all genres (writing, painting and sculpture, predominantly) as being equally powerful and part of the same artistic project.

The Roman context offered an experience of artwork of all genres and media that was, in Reynolds’ terms, ‘not unlike [viewing] Dancing’. Wrigley observes that ‘[t]he idea that, in Rome, one could experience authentic and energizing contact with art because it was embedded in its original envelope underpinned the city’s talismanic status’ (*Roman Fever*, 218). The city’s exhibition culture, driven by the practice of visiting artists’ studios and the display of new work in venues such as the Vatican museum, led to a collective consumption that was similar to watching a performance.

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<sup>88</sup> Julian Hawthorne, *Hawthorne and his Circle* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1903), p. 289. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>89</sup> Alex Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 25. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>90</sup> Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, quoted in W. J. T. Mitchell, ‘The Politics of Genre: Space and Time in Lessing’s *Laocoon*.’ *Representations*, no. 6 (1984): 98-115 (p. 98).

Dehn Gilmore describes how, ‘in the Victorian period, the literary world’s novel culture and the art world’s galleries, museums, and exhibitions, were bound not just by common features of artistic praxis, but also by a common experience of expansion’; ‘the worlds of literary and visual culture were united by a shared investment in certain representational modes, subjects, and values.’ Gilmore links growing exhibition culture with the enhanced reach and productivity in the literary world enabled by print culture, and argues that Victorian exhibition culture gave rise to ‘new forms of looking at art’.<sup>91</sup> These new approaches were informed by print culture that, with improving technologies in wood engraving, were able to ‘print image and text in one pass’, and which therefore drew closer together the two media.<sup>92</sup> ‘The expanding print culture in Britain in the nineteenth century marries literature and art in a myriad of ways,’ observes McCue (21). Gerard Curtis notes that the ‘*Art Union* (1837-1914) in 1839 stated that educating and improving mankind was to be achieved “by a union of art with literature – a combination which is more readily made by means of wood engraving than by any other mode with which we are at present acquainted”’.<sup>93</sup> Print culture thus treated the written word and the visual image alike: an ‘educating and improving’ combination.

As in print culture, in the city-state of Rome, ‘the land of art’, where ruins, buildings and the holdings of museums and galleries were alike attractions to the expatriate visitor, the visual image and the written word were aligned. Visitors’ experiences of Rome were mediated by the images and texts that described the city which they had encountered before they arrived, and which reinforced the relationship between literature and art. In Rome, visitors gathered to experience art with a ‘new form of looking’ that further reduced the distinction between the two genres. Potts writes that

The practices of viewing art in a gallery are curiously situated between the more private praxis of reading and the more public praxis of attending the performance of a play or a piece of music or the showing of a film. In a gallery, one is not alone with a work as with a book in a

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<sup>91</sup> Dehn Gilmore, *The Victorian Novel and the Space of Art: Fictional Form on Display* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 3, 166. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>92</sup> Gerard Curtis, *Art and the Material Book in Victorian England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p. 17.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

domestic environment or even in a library. But neither do viewers line up in front of works of art as they do in front of a performance to enjoy a properly collective experience[.] (21)

In mid-century Rome, however, where artists came to engage and exchange with one another, the experience was ‘a properly collective experience’ in which the exchange of ideas and inspiration was so prevalent that even reading became part of the ‘public praxis’ thanks to the robust structures of artistic exchange in the city. Story’s note in *Roba di Roma* that ‘[e]very Englishman [in Rome] has a Murray for information and a Byron for sentiment, and finds out by them what he is to know and feel at every step’ indicates the extent to which reading was a group activity in Rome (6-7). In this context, it is notable that one of the largest rooms in the Story apartment at the Palazzo Barberini was transformed into a theatre during the Storys’ tenancy, ‘complete with footlights and scenery’, where ‘the Storys and their friends gave amateur productions in English, Italian, and French’ and ‘many musical compositions were here given their first performances’.<sup>94</sup> At the heart of the apartment that was the heart of the expatriate artistic community, was a performance space.

Reynolds’ idea of viewing art as ‘dance’ is relevant here for its focus on both movement, form and ephemerality. As is discussed towards the end of this introduction, the significance of art in Rome during this period for the expatriate artist was the mobility of its aura and the tension of the position it occupied between the permanent and the temporary. Luisa Calè and Patrizia Di Bello argue that, when confronted with an artwork, ‘the “immediate and present data” of all of our senses also mingle in perception: the functions of the human eye are mediated by touch, affected by the bodies of writers and readers, makers and consumers, and by the social lives of both the bodies and objects in question’. They argue for the use of the term ‘beholder’ rather than ‘viewer’ ‘for the coming together of the conceptual and the manual in an act of seeing that is also a grasping, a handling.’<sup>95</sup> ‘Beholding’ art in mid century Rome was an act mediated not only by touch, as Calè and Di Bello describe, but also by the self-conscious knowledge of the expatriate artist that by entering the

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<sup>94</sup> Earnest, pp. 120-121.

<sup>95</sup> Luisa Calè and Patrizia Di Bello, ‘Introduction: Nineteenth-Century Objects and Beholders’ in *Illustrations, Optics and Objects in Nineteenth-Century Literary and Visual Cultures* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010), pp. 1-24 (p. 4).

exhibition space of Rome they were accessing art, rather than simply observing it, with a view to creating their own.

The act of beholding by expatriate artists in Rome was a product of the circumstances of, and convergences enabled by, Rome's exceptional status in the mid century as a 'land of art'. Within that land, expatriate artists were, in Hawthorne's terms, 'free citizens': the implication of Hawthorne's phrase is that there was a sense in which, elsewhere, the artist was not free. 'In *The Marble Faun*,' Earnest observes, 'Hawthorne pictured the fraternity of artists in Rome as refugees from "the unsympathizing cities of their native land"' (117). *The Marble Faun*'s Rome was the 'ideal home which they sigh for in advance, and are so loath to migrate from, after once breathing its enchanted air' (102). Hawthorne thus establishes the expatriate artistic community as one made up of exiles; he uses the term directly in a discussion of Hiram Powers in his *Notebooks*—'It makes a very unsatisfactory life, thus to spend the greater part of it in exile'—and of his own experience in comparison to Powers, referring to 'my shorter exile' (437, 280). James applies the term to Story in his biography, describing him as a 'distinct [...] example [...] of the permanent absentee of exile' (2:222). Story himself wrote to Norton that, 'Art seems to be an exile for an American'.<sup>96</sup> Jane Stabler's *The Artistry of Exile* applies the term 'exile' to the British artists of the first half of the nineteenth century who went to Italy, finding that, for this group 'exile was a repudiation of English society as much as an ostracizing pressure from without'.<sup>97</sup> Exile, writes Andrew Gurr, is both a common and productive state for the modern writer: writers 'utilize the conditions of their exile', which include 'a search for identity, the quest for home, though self-discovery or self-realisation. In the metropolitan regions—Britain and America for instance—this has usually taken the form of a search for a past, a cultural heritage'.<sup>98</sup> For the British and American expatriates in Rome, their experience of the exile was an engagement with their heritage as artists.

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<sup>96</sup> Story, quoted in Seidler, p. 172.

<sup>97</sup> Jane Stabler, *The Artistry of Exile: Romantic and Victorian Writers in Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 5. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>98</sup> Andrew Gurr, *Writers in Exile: The Identity of Home in Modern Literature* (Brighton: Harvester, 1981), pp. 17, 14.

The reliance on the image and vocabulary of exile by members of this community can be read as an attempt to distance themselves from a newly popularized form of 'tourism', as analysed by James Buzard:

[A]fter the Napoleonic Wars, the exaggerated perception that the Continental tour was becoming more broadly accessible than ever before gave rise to new formulations about what constituted 'authentic' cultural experience [...] [A]nti tourism evolved into a symbolic economy in which travellers and writers displayed marks of originality and 'authenticity' in an attempt to win credit for acculturation [...] Travel's educative, acculturating function took on a newly competitive aspect[.]<sup>99</sup>

To be an 'exile' rather than a 'tourist' was to stake a claim to a cultural and authentic experience essential to the community's project of making art in Rome.

It is nonetheless true that, while thus self-identifying as exiles, this community can more easily be described, in Mary McCarthy's terms, as expatriates:

The expatriate is a hedonist. He is usually an artist or a person who thinks he is artistic. He has no politics or, if he has any, like the Brownings he has acquired them from the country he has adopted. [...] The expatriate is a by-product of industrialism. At the same time, of course, he owes his presence abroad to the prosperity induced by the factories and manufactures he is fleeing from.<sup>100</sup>

The British and American artists in Rome are, by this definition, expatriates. They engaged with Risorgimento politics while fearing the effects unification might have on their 'land of art',<sup>101</sup> and took advantage of the cheap living in the city. They are

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<sup>99</sup> James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 6.

<sup>100</sup> Mary McCarthy, 'Exiles, Expatriates and Internal Emigres,' *The Listener*, 86 (25 November 1971), pp. 705-708 (p. 707).

<sup>101</sup> Dickens, writing from London, stated, 'I feel for Italy almost as if I were Italian born', but his engagement with Risorgimento politics remained in the imaginary realm. See Michael Hollington, 'From the Pink Jail to the Fishponds: Palaces and Prisons in the Dreamwork of Dickens's Italy', in *Imagining Italy: Victorian Writers and Travellers*, ed. by Michael Hollington, Catherine Watts, John Jordan (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), pp. 78-88 (p. 86). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

‘voluntarily liv[ing] in an alien country [...] for personal or social reason’.<sup>102</sup> The naïve, apolitical and hedonistic sculptor protagonist of Henry James’ *Roderick Hudson* (1875) is an embodiment McCarthy’s expatriate traits. This thesis refers to the community as being formed of expatriates, while acknowledging that they commonly identified their own experience as one of exile.

The experience of exile for the expatriates did not end if and when they returned to their homelands. Rather, it intensified: When Charles Eliot Norton, who had become friends with Gaskell in Rome, sent her a description of the Roman Campagna, her emotional response was one of homesickness;<sup>103</sup> she wrote, ‘the Campagna “bits” in your letters always give one a sort of Heimweh.’<sup>104</sup> The three months Gaskell spent in Rome—the ‘tip top point’ of her life—were, this formulation suggests, three months that she spent at *home*. Carolyn Lambert describes how, for the female Victorian writer, ‘Private space, even within the relatively spacious middle-class homes was often difficult to find. The need for psychological and emotional space within the home caused a type of homelessness, a detached, albeit temporary, wandering from the constraints of domestic ties.’<sup>105</sup> Gaskell’s ‘Heimweh’ for Rome, viewed in the context of the ‘homelessness’ of the female writer in the domestic sphere, demonstrates the extent to which, in the *Marble Faun*’s terms, Rome had become her ‘ideal home’ (102). Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, too, describes how, on returning to Rome, she ‘felt a keen delight at seeing again the city of cities. It was a singular sense of going home.’<sup>106</sup> Doreen Massey and Pat Jess describe home in terms of cultural belonging:

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<sup>102</sup> Edward Said, *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays* (London: Granta, 2001), p. 144.

<sup>103</sup> The German term for homesickness, ‘Heimweh,’ may have been a word Gaskell particularly associated with Rome: *William Wetmore Story and his Friends* describes Mrs Story and her friends being, ‘most occupied, really, in learning the meaning of Heimweh’ (204).

<sup>104</sup> Elizabeth Gaskell, *Letters of Mrs. Gaskell and Charles Eliot Norton*, ed. by Jane Whitehill (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), p. 19. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text as ‘Whitehill’.

<sup>105</sup> Carolyn Lambert, *The Meanings of Home in Elizabeth Gaskell* (Brighton: Victorian Secret, 2013), pp. 117-8

<sup>106</sup> Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy* (New York: G. P. Putnam & Son, 1869), p. 541. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

We think of our culture as a home, a place where we naturally belong, where we originally came from, which first stamped us with our identity, to which we are powerfully bonded [...] by ties that are inherited, obligatory and unquestioning. To be among those who share the same cultural identity makes us feel, culturally, at home.<sup>107</sup>

The artist's experience in Rome, being 'kept warm' by other artists, was one of being 'stamped' with an identity. The expatriate artists in Rome were thus at once at home and exiled, both when they were in Rome, and when they returned to their countries of origin. This exile was productive in both states: 'The use of memory as the basis for the finest kinds of creativity is one of the strongest features which the exiled writers have in common.'<sup>108</sup> 'It was in those charming Roman days that my life, at any rate, culminated,' Gaskell later wrote. 'I shall never be so happy again. I don't think I was ever so happy before' (Chapple, 476).

'I launch at paradise, and I sail towards home,' wrote Donne of his spiritual journey and relationship with God.<sup>109</sup> For Gaskell this metaphor was realized and lived in their experience of Rome, which was at once an artistic utopia and an artistic home. Mid-nineteenth-century Rome was exceptional in part because it had a reputation for being so; visitors' expectations of a unique experience in Rome became self-fulfilling prophecies. Nonetheless, as outlined above, conditions in the city consolidated the experience it offered as unique, some linked to its reputation, and some entirely distinct from it.

If each of the categories identified in the above pages formed a circle in a Venn diagram, it would certainly be possible to find other locations and cities that existed within some of the overlapping fields: Florence, Venice and Pompeii were other centres of artistic activity in Italy where expatriates engaged rigorously with ideas of history and dream, and as such have relevance to elements of this thesis; Boston was a hub of transcendentalist intellectualism where artists could explore the idea of interdisciplinary art and exchange; archaeological digs in the Middle East offered unprecedented access to the past, and opened up areas of antiquity to the artistic

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<sup>107</sup> Doreen Massey and Pat Jess, Eds., *A Place in the World: Places, Cultures and Globalization* (Basingstoke: Open University Press, 1995), p. 185.

<sup>108</sup> Gurr, p. 26.

<sup>109</sup> John Donne, quoted in Gurr, p. 13.



imagination, with a fruitful tension between the known and unknown. Nonetheless, Rome sits at the very heart of this diagram, bringing together ideas, inspiration, expectation, heritage, practical support, resources, community and subject matter in a way that was experienced as unique by the expatriates who stayed there in the mid century, and which provided unique conditions for the making and exchange of new art and literature.

The second section of this introduction explores how the expatriate artistic community in Rome defined its exceptionalism in terms of energy borrowed from and inspired by contemporary developments in physics.

## II. ARTISTIC ENERGY IN THE ETERNAL CITY

Rome, the paradoxical artistic home in which expatriate artists were able to ‘throw off the restraints and responsibilities of life at home’, was frequently depicted by Anglo-American travellers and expatriates as ‘a land of dreams and visions.’<sup>110</sup> Many of these depictions leant on the imagery of sleep and rest that arose from the sense of Italy as ‘a place of holiday’.<sup>111</sup> Phrases such as ‘*dolce far niente*’ occur with frequency in expatriate accounts of Italian stays.<sup>112</sup> For Charles Eliot Norton the first sighting of Italy suggests it is ‘the very home of summer and of repose’; Pisa, too, ‘has an air of repose’ (*Notes of Travel*, 2, 8). Gaskell writes to Norton of an ‘exquisite dreamy Torcello Sunday, —that still, sunny, sleepy canal’ (Whitehill, 12). Charles Dickens’ *Pictures from Italy* described the ‘half-sorrowful and half-delicious doze’ of ‘rambl[ing] through these places gone to sleep and basking in the sun!’ (89); the houses in Pisa are ‘sleepy’ (146); Naples is ‘sleeping’ (236). Hawthorne’s *Notebooks* repeatedly noted the sleepiness of the Italian people, observing them ‘lying dormant in the sun, on the steps of the basilica; indeed, now that the sun is getting warm, they seem to take advantage of every quiet nook to bask in, and perhaps to go to sleep’

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<sup>110</sup> Paul Baker, *The Fortunate Pilgrims: Americans in Italy 1800-1860* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 19; Alison Chapman, ‘Risorgimenti: spiritualism, politics and Elizabeth Barrett Browning’, *Unfolding the South*, pp. 70-89 (p. 75).

<sup>111</sup> Robert K. Martin and Leland S. Person, ‘Introduction’, in *Roman Holidays*, pp. 1-8 (p. 1).

<sup>112</sup> See Story’s *Roba di Roma* and Gaskell’s *Letters* in particular.

(134). Italy's sleepiness did, of course, give rise to dreams: Dickens' *Pictures from Italy* includes a chapter entitled 'An Italian Dream', in which the city of Venice is experienced through a long, unbroken dream-sequence. Of the Arno Valley, Hawthorne writes, 'it is as if you were dreaming about the valley,—as if the valley itself were dreaming, and met you half-way in your own dream' (*Notebooks*, 430). Peabody Hawthorne describes 'a dream-like quality in my enjoyment' of Italy (468).

If Italy is sleepy overall, however, Rome is a site both of dreams and, conversely, of awakening. Chapman and Stabler map this paradox onto the two cities of Florence and Rome, finding that 'Italy, then, is a place of renaissance, usually signified by Florence, but also decay and the sepulchre, usually figured by Rome' (10).<sup>113</sup> However, these dual perceptions also operate *within* the city of Rome, where, Wrigley notes, 'the conscious image of the city as a repository of great art was accompanied by a more profound undercurrent of fantasy and uncertainty' (*Roman Fever*, 26). For Peabody Hawthorne it is 'a 'dream-city' (541); for Hawthorne the spectacle of the carnival from a balcony on the Corso is 'like a dream' (*Notebooks*, 501). Dickens, nonetheless, having dreamed and dozed his way through the rest of the country, found on arrival in Rome that it was 'no more *my* Rome: the Rome of anybody's fancy, man or boy; degraded and fallen and lying asleep in the sun among a heap of ruins: than the Place de la Concorde in Paris is' (155-6). While echoing the similar disappointment of finding that America was 'not the republic of [his] imagination',<sup>114</sup> Dickens' realisation that Rome was not 'lying asleep in the sun' is similar to the initial impression made by the city on the many other artists for whom it was a wakeful rather than drowsy site. Michael Hollington finds that this tension, 'between sleeping and waking, the imaginary and the real – is the key image for thinking about Italy and its impact on Dickens's imagination' (83). While the residents of Rome themselves 'lie down and fall asleep' in the Roman air, Nathaniel

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<sup>113</sup> The notion of Rome's decay was so entrenched in the nineteenth century that, Ian Jenkins notes, it mapped onto a chronological understanding of the history of classical sculpture: 'In the traditional eighteenth- and nineteenth-century hierarchy of art, Egypt represents the primitive forerunner of Greece, while Rome is seen as a manifestation of an inevitable decline.' Ian Jenkins, *Archaeologists and Aesthetes in the Sculpture Galleries of the British Museum 1800-1939* (London: British Museum Press, 1992), p. 102.

<sup>114</sup> Charles Dickens, *The Oxford Companion to Charles Dickens*, ed. by Paul Schlicke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 16.

Hawthorne vows: ‘I would not sleep in the open air for whatever my life may be worth’ (*Notebooks*, 172). This objection to sleeping in what Hawthorne described as the ‘malevolent’ air of Rome did not, however, prevent him from ‘dreaming of a story’ (*Notebooks*, 283), and in his Roman novel, *The Marble Faun* (1860), the air has been transformed: ‘all who breathe Roman air, find free admission, and come hither to taste the languid enjoyment of the day-dream that they call life’ (56). For John Gibson, his experience of Roman dreaming was a pre-emptive one. He recalls a dream in which an eagle carries him to a ‘very large town’: ‘the people shouted, “This is Rome!” “Oh, Rome! Rome! Rome!” cried I aloud.’ ‘Thy fate will carry thee over every difficulty to Rome’, his mother states (Matthews, 29). Gibson’s arrival in the city was thus the waking realization of a dream, as much as it was a dream itself. Rome was a space of dreaming in an active sense, rather than a passive or inert one.

Italy’s drowsiness, and Rome’s in particular, were experienced by expatriate artists in terms of potential. Theodore Ziolkowski describes the relationship between sleep and potential in Henrich Heine’s ‘The Gods in Exile’ (1853), which suggests that

after the triumph of Christianity the ancient deities did not simply vanish; instead, they went into exile (an idea that appealed to Heine, the political exile), assuming the shape of animals (e.g. in Egypt) or retreating into the statues that represent them. The statues therefore represent a state of sleep, not a stony death. There the gods await the day when they can once again emerge in all their splendour.<sup>115</sup>

When the gods, who are ‘poor refugees’, awaken, they are ‘beautiful as pictures, although their faces were all as white as marble’; they have ‘the appearance of moving statues.’<sup>116</sup> Heine’s story makes literal the expatriate experience in Rome, in which the artworks, and the city itself in its role as an exhibition space, were perceived as containing powerful potential. Charles Eliot Norton’s depiction of the history of Rome notes, ‘that strong thrill of energy which ran through her veins as she awoke

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<sup>115</sup> Theodore Ziolkowski, *Disenchanted Images: A Literary Iconology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977) p. 45. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>116</sup> Heinrich Heine, ‘The Gods in Exile’, in *Walter Pater: Imaginary Portraits*, ed. by Lene Østermark-Johansen (London: The Modern Humanities Research Association, 2014), pp. 293-298 (p. 296).

from her prolonged slumber in the Dark Ages' (309). The city was a site of awakening: a place where the power of the old gods could still animate the statues. Weld, after exploring the drowsiness of Rome, went on to 'willingly admit that, as Rome has passed through several phases of existence and seems to possess a magic life—Eternal being impressed on her brow—she may have a high destiny reserved for her' (511). The dream of Rome was one of the city's 'eternal' and 'magic life': Rome had an energetic force that counteracted, or at least threatened to counteract, its sleeping state.

'Such is the pleasant light with which I see the Barberini drawing-room suffused,' wrote James in *William Wetmore Story*, recalling Story's Roman apartments during one of the gatherings of expatriate artists, 'very much as places of reunion today have their share of the electric light.' This light, however, was predominantly metaphorical: 'It was virtually "turned on," for instance, during the late hours, that everyone had, all day, to have been breathing golden air, and that the golden air was exhaled again by the simple fact of any presence' (210). James describes a circuit of 'golden air' like 'electric light' that is drawn in from the Roman environs, exhaled in the expatriates' apartment, shared between visitors. By describing air with an adjective ('golden') usually associated with light, James highlights the extent to which 'golden air' behaves like other forms of energy: it circulates and is shared between artists and things. Light illuminates the space and community even across time, appearing in the much earlier *Roderick Hudson*: 'Roderick, bearing the lamp and glowing in its radiant circle, seemed the beautiful image of a genius which combined sincerity with power' (123). This circuit of golden air/light was a familiar idea, shared by writers within the community in the mid century, and used to describe the 'magic life' of the city. This 'magic' in Rome was experienced as a unique source of a specific kind of energy—artistic, inspirational—that could be mined, accessed and used by expatriate artists, the conception of which was derived from contemporary scientific theories regarding the movement, circulation and preservation of energy.

The subject of energy and its movement gained increasing attention from scientists in the nineteenth century as the field of thermodynamics emerged. In 1854, William Thomson used the term 'thermodynamics' to describe 'the branch of physics that deals with the relations between heat and *other forms of energy*' [original

emphasis].<sup>117</sup> By 1865 Rudolph Clausius had crystallized thermodynamic theory into two rules: ‘1. The energy of the universe is constant. 2. The entropy of the universe tends towards a maximum.’<sup>118</sup> In the years and decades preceding these developments, however, ideas regarding the circulation, preservation and loss of energy had been prevalent in scientific and cultural discourse: Bruce J. Hunt finds that ‘[t]he idea that all of the forces and powers of nature are manifestations of a single pervasive but impalpable quantity emerged in its modern form [...] in the 1840s; by 1860 it had come to be widely accepted as a fundamental scientific truth.’<sup>119</sup> The beginnings of formal thermodynamics are traceable to 1824, when Nicolas Léonard Sadi Carnot published *Réflexions sur la Puissance Motrice de Feu, et sur les Machines Propres à Développer cette Puissance* (*Reflections on the Motive Power of Fire*); in 1849, Thomson’s ‘Account of Carnot’s Theory of the Motive Power of Heat’ imagined a ‘perfect thermo-dynamic engine’;<sup>120</sup> three years later Thomson proposed ‘A Mechanical Theory of Thermo-Electric Currents’.<sup>121</sup> As these theories emerged and were debated, the idea of ‘energy’ entered public discourse; artists and writers made use of the idea in work read broadly beyond the scientific community.

In 1850, Leigh Percival’s ‘Chemistry of a Candle’ transposed scientific theories of energy into the domestic sphere. The article narrated a conversation about heat, movement and fire between a child and his uncle: ‘I hope with your candle you’ll throw some light upon the subject,’ quips the uncle.<sup>122</sup> Dickens’ *Bleak House* (1852)

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<sup>117</sup> William Thomson, quoted in Barri J. Gold, *Thermopoetics: Energy in Victorian Literature and Science* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010), p. 5. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>118</sup> Rudolph Clausius, *The Mechanical Theory of Heat with Its Application to the Steam-Engine and to the Physical Properties of Bodies* (London: John Van Vaust, 1867), p. 365.

<sup>119</sup> Bruce J. Hunt, *Pursuing Power and Light: Technology and Physic from James Watt to Albert Einstein* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), p. 25.

<sup>120</sup> William Thomson, ‘An Account of Carnot’s Theory of the Motive Power of Heat’, in *Mathematical and Physical Papers*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1882), p. 118.

<sup>121</sup> William Thomson, ‘A Mechanical Theory of Thermo-Electric Currents’, in *Mathematical and Physical Papers*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1882), p. 316.

<sup>122</sup> ‘The Chemistry of a Candle’, *Household Words*, Vol. 1, No. 19, ed. by Charles Dickens, 3 August 1850, pp. 439-443 (p. 443).

opens with a reference to ‘the death of the sun’.<sup>123</sup> Gillian Beer’s study of the influence of Darwin describes the pervasiveness of certain scientific theories: ‘Everyone found themselves living in a Darwinian world [...]. So the question of who read Darwin, or whether a writer had read Darwin, becomes only a fraction of the answer. [...] Who had read what does not fix limits.’ A similar phenomenon occurs in the wake of discoveries regarding energy and its movement; Beer’s observation that ‘[i]n the mid-nineteenth-century, scientists still shared a common language with other educated readers and writers of their time,’ indicates a shared discourse during this period between scientists and the broader culture.<sup>124</sup> Barri J. Gold argues that the ideas and vocabulary of thermodynamics, as used and propagated in the nineteenth century, were explored, developed and sometimes pre-empted by works of literature and art: ‘Literature participates in creating as well as expressing the cultural milieu in which science happens’ (15). Science, ‘as a part of Victorian culture, not only played a crucial role in how the Victorians thought about themselves and the world, but it also provided them with a vocabulary for expressing it’, writes James Mussell. ‘And of course, the concepts, ideas, and language of scientists were derived from the context within which they lived their lives. Victorian science, in other words, was part of Victorian culture, and Victorian culture in turn shaped Victorian science.’<sup>125</sup> Victorians, Alison Winter argues, placed such value on science because ‘they understood natural laws as underpinning, or having implications for, social laws.’<sup>126</sup>

Not only was ‘common language’ shared between scientists and writers; so, too, was a broad interest in scientific discovery. Many of the artists and writers central to this thesis pursued, actively, information about and understanding of the scientific world. Discussing Nathaniel Hawthorne’s relationship to science, Bruce H. Franklin notes that ‘the doctors, chemists, botanists, mesmerists, physicists and inventors who

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<sup>123</sup> Dickens, *Bleak House* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 11.

<sup>124</sup> Gillian Beer, *Darwin’s Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (London, Boston Melbourne and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), p. 6.

<sup>125</sup> James Mussell, ‘Science’, in *Charles Dickens in Context*, ed. by Sally Ledger and Holly Furneaux (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 326-333 (p. 326).

<sup>126</sup> Alison Winter, *Mesmerized: Powers of Mind in Victorian Britain* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 31. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

parade the wonders of their skills through [his] fiction’ were informed by the scientific writing he encountered as editor of *The American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge*; Hawthorne himself wrote about ‘a new method of preserving the dead’ by ‘converting animal substances into stone’ in the *American Journal of Science*.<sup>127</sup> Harriet Hosmer, writes Kate Culkin, ‘saw herself as a scientist’ and ‘believed an association with science and mechanics would allow her to portray herself as both patriotic and enlightened.’ Culkin notes that, ‘[i]n 1852 Sarah Hale mentioned in *Godey’s Lady’s Book* that the young artist pursued the “science of anatomy”’;<sup>128</sup> Hosmer’s later project of creating a perpetual motion machine indicates that her scientific interests include energy specifically.<sup>129</sup> Elizabeth Gaskell was a member of a burgeoning scientific community in her hometown of Manchester: Jenny Uglow describes how in the city, once a ‘scientific backwater’, ‘[d]iscussion flourished and new societies bloomed: the Natural History Society (1821); the Royal Manchester Institution (1823); the Mechanics Institute (1824); the Statistical Society (1834); the Geological Society (1838).’ William Gaskell was a member of ‘the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society’ and as such ‘followed scientific innovations closely’. William Gaskell’s interest and knowledge reached his wife; Uglow situates Elizabeth Gaskell within ‘overlap[ping]’ ‘philanthropic, political, literary, [and] scientific’ circles.<sup>130</sup>

In the Roman context, Wrigley’s *Roman Fever* notes that ‘scientific and cultural ideas about the nature and effects of the Roman climate share a considerable degree of common ground’ (15). In the same manner, ideas borrowed from scientific discussion of energy underpin expatriate artists’ imagination and experience of the city and its role as a source of inspiration. Accounts of inspiration, excavation, exhaustion and making art in Rome were couched in terms of an exchange or movement of energy, drawing on ideas of the travel of electricity, light and heat as

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<sup>127</sup> Bruce H. Franklin, ‘Hawthorne and Science Fiction,’ *The Centennial Review*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1966), pp. 112–130 (pp.115–6).

<sup>128</sup> Kate Culkin, *Harriet Hosmer: A Cultural Biography* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010), p. 122. All further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>129</sup> Hosmer’s invention is discussed in the third section of Chapter Two of this thesis.

<sup>130</sup> Jenny Uglow, *Elizabeth Gaskell: A Habit of Stories* (London: Faber & Faber, 1999), pp. 134, 309.

well as vaguer terms that describe a Benjaminian idea of aura including ‘perfume’, ‘music’, ‘essence’ and ‘soul’, which describe an idea or affect that travels between objects and beholders in the same way that energy was perceived to move.<sup>131</sup> In James’s *Roderick Hudson*, Roderick is described, in Rome as ‘feeling his powers [...] [T]hey had thoroughly kindled in the glowing aesthetic atmosphere of Rome the ardent young fellow should be pardoned for believing that he never was to see the end of them,’ a description that combines the language of energy with the ever-present threat of loss (102). Images identified by Gold as ‘suggest[ing] the concerns of thermodynamics more broadly: loss and gain, waste, systems, the behavior of gases, order and disorder, and changes of state or form’, are traceable throughout the writing and artworks of expatriates in Rome during this period, as artists navigated the meaning of the ‘eternal’ city in a world increasingly preoccupied with loss and decay (39).

Despite the significance and number of scientific discoveries in the nineteenth century, Alison Winter finds that ‘Victorians did not treat their discoveries in such a simple and straightforward manner. Despite all their ambition and apparent confidence, they regarded science as unsettled. [...] There could be no agreement over the meaning and attribution of words like “expert” and “amateur” because natural philosophers had not divvied up nature’s territories among themselves’ (26). The ‘unsettled’ nature of contemporary science is reflected in the literature of the period, in which Allen MacDuffie identifies genres of ‘thermodynamic narratives’, defined as ‘stories about the way energy travels through social, natural, and cosmic systems’, and ‘alternative thermodynamic narratives’, which ‘are deeply invested in questions about energy, work, waste, transformation, and systematicity, but that depart in important ways from some of the ideological and theological assumptions present in canonical thermodynamic discourse’.<sup>132</sup> These two forms of narrative operate side by side in the nineteenth century in part because, while scientific discourse formed part of broader cultural conversations, certain of its tenets and vocabulary remained vague.

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<sup>131</sup> See discussion of these terms in relation to Benjamin in Chapter Two.

<sup>132</sup> Allen MacDuffie, *Victorian Literature, Energy, and the Ecological Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 13, 15. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.



In particular, there was a breadth of terms during this period for what is now most commonly called ‘energy’. In *The Constitution of the Universe* (1865), John Tyndall identified and criticised the permissive breadth of the definition: ‘[A]mbiguity in the use of the term ‘force’ has been for some time creeping upon us unawares.’<sup>133</sup> He argued,

good names are essential; and here, as yet, we are not provided with such. We have had the force of gravity and living force—two utterly distinct things. We have had pulls and tensions; and we might have had the force of heat, the force of light, the force of magnetism, or the force of electricity—all of which terms have been employed more or less loosely by writers on physics. (26)

Without Tyndall’s ‘essential’ ‘good names’, artists were able to apply the terms and rules of physics to broader sensations and phenomena. Gillian Beer identifies the difficulties encountered by scientists who were seeking a language to describe entirely new discoveries: in a study of language used by James Clerk Maxwell in 1873, she finds that the ‘description of a novel concept’ is ‘permitted by its familiarization; but the activity of that description [...] is not so much “scientific” [...] as it is speculative and persuasive.’<sup>134</sup> Scientists writing about thermodynamics faced similar difficulties in applying known language to the previously unknown.

Sherrie Lynne Lyons describes how the developments in nineteenth-century understanding about physics uncovered,

aspects of matter that had been quite mysterious: the nature of energy, heat, magnetism, electricity, light, and the relationship between these various phenomena. [...] The discovery of radioactivity, X-rays and electrons also suggested the possibility of still other undiscovered new forces.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Tyndall, *The Constitution of the Universe* (Melbourne: Stillwell and Knight, 1869), p. 16. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>134</sup> Gillian Beer, ‘Problems of Description in the Language of Discovery’, in *One Culture: Essays in Science and Literature*, ed. by George Levine (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), pp. 35-58 (p. 37).

<sup>135</sup> Sherrie Lynn Lyons, *Species, Serpents, Spirits and Skulls: Science at the Margins in the Victorian Age* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), p. 106. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text as ‘S. L. Lyons’.

The possibility of ‘undiscovered new forces’ enabled artists in Rome to develop an idea of a specific kind of energy—artistic energy—that they experienced in the city. Informing this was an understanding of the way energy moved and the many various forms it took, but not precise knowledge of what energy exactly was, as is outlined Tyndall and Maxwell. Suggestive and also vague, the notion of energy put forward by scientific study in the mid century was therefore available for artists to interpret and apply to more abstract conceptions, such as artistic impulse and inspiration.

The artistic exploitation of energy, Underwood notes, had its roots in the early decades of the nineteenth century, when ‘the line separating psychological from physical powers could not be drawn with great precision.’ Underwood argues that an understanding of ‘Romantic poetic theory in its own terms [...] must first set aside anachronistic confidence about the boundary between psychology and physics, and believe that Hazlitt means it when he says that “poetry puts a spirit of life and motion into the universe.”’<sup>136</sup> Literature and science, argues George Levine, ‘are modes of discourse’ that ‘can and should be studied as deriving from common cultural sources’, and therefore form part of ‘one culture’.<sup>137</sup> Rhys Iwan Morus and John B. Beer have demonstrated how the Romantics, with their conception of poetic inspiration, first provided scientists studying energy with a vocabulary for their work.<sup>138</sup> Coleridge’s ‘To William Wordsworth’ includes an early stanza dominated by vocabulary of energy: ‘Tides obedient to external Force’; ‘inner Power’; ‘power streamed’; ‘light reflected as a light bestowed’.<sup>139</sup> Morus finds a link between the ‘central tenet of Romantic philosophy that nature should be apprehended as a coherent and meaningful whole’ and ‘early nineteenth-century work to demonstrate the underlying unity of

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<sup>136</sup> Ted Underwood, *The Work of the Sun: Literature, Science, and Political Economy, 1760-1860* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 134. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>137</sup> George Levine, ‘Introduction’, *One Culture: Essays in Science and Literature*, ed. by George Levine (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), pp. 3-34 (p. 4). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>138</sup> See Rhys Iwan Morus, *When Physics Became King* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), John B. Beer, *Romantic Consciousness: Blake to Mary Shelley* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). Further references to both editions are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>139</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ‘To William Wordsworth’, in *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Poetical Works*, No. 16, Vol. 1, Part 2, ed. by J. C. C. Mays (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 815-819 (p. 816).

physical forces' (Morus, 58; Gold 49-50). Underwood notes that '[t]he frequency of *energy* and *energetic* in the written record tripled between 1750 and 1800' and that the term 'energy' no longer described 'work as a conscious product of the moral will'; rather 'writers began to compare the energy of the worker to the spontaneous energies of nature' (33). Shelley's *Defense of Poetry* conceives of 'the mind in creation [...] as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness [...] but when composition begins, inspiration is already on the decline', describing both energy and entropy in terms of the artistic process.<sup>140</sup> Keats, Underwood writes, had 'a tendency to think of poetry as a power with a real existence outside written texts—and for that matter, outside writers and readers of poems. Keats often defines poetry as pure power—agency without an agent' (135). Timothy Clark describes the Romantic conception of inspiration as one that 'held to blur conceptions of agency: the writer is possessed or dispossessed, and may undergo an extreme state of elation'; in this formulation, the artist is a kind of conductor or transmitter of inspiration that was experienced and defined as 'power' or energy. Furthermore, this transmission occurs not only between the artist and his or her art, but 'may bear a peculiar transitivity, one that confounds distinctions between self and other. The writer may seem to be passively inspired, as if by some hidden agent, yet the same writer is said actively to inspire auditors or readers.'<sup>141</sup>

Rome, as discussed above, was 'the quintessential Romantic city' (*Roman Fever*, 1). A proliferation of Romantic texts suggested Rome as the capital city of inspiration and art. Relating these two features of the Romantic preoccupation—of inspiration as a kind of energy, and of Rome as a source of inspiration—demonstrates the foundations on which a mid-nineteenth-century conception of Rome as the source of artistic energy was built. Considering the relationship between discussions of energy in arts and science more broadly, Gold focuses on how 'both literature and science draw on "root metaphors" or perpetuate developing mythologies, deploy similar methods of reasoning, and address the same cultural concerns' (18-19).

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<sup>140</sup> Percy Bysshe Shelley, 'A Defense of Poetry', in *Shelley's Poetry and Prose*, ed. by Donald H. Reiman and Sharon B. Powers (New York: Norton, 1977), pp. 478-508 (p. 478). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>141</sup> Timothy Clark, *The Theory of Inspiration: Composition as a crisis of subjectivity in Romantic and Post-Romantic writing* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 3. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

Throughout the nineteenth century, artists who came to Rome were self-consciously following in the footsteps of the Romantics, and they therefore associated the city with artistic energy and transmission, which was described in terms shared with scientific discourse on the movement of energy. In other words, an idea central both to the nineteenth-century imagination of Rome and to early writing on energy and thermodynamics stemmed from the same source—the Romantics—in such a way as to create a continued relationship between the city and the science.

A Romantic-inspired understanding of Rome formulated the city as a source, or vessel, of artistic inspiration. This inspiration was conceived of as a kind of energy that could be transmitted between places and people, between people and art, and between people and other people. John B. Beer observes that the Romantic notion of the ‘inner Being’ as ‘a core that could be expressed through light and energy provided the material for a conception of interlinking, each Being responding to others’ (51). The ‘interlinking’ facilitated by this conception of energy enabled the expatriate artists of the mid century to feel connected not only to the Romantics but to each other. In a chapter of *The Marble Faun* entitled ‘An Aesthetic Company’, Hawthorne describes a meeting of artists in Rome in terms of the exchange of energy between them: artists, after ‘breathing [Rome’s] enchanted air [...] find themselves in force’ in the city (*Marble Faun*, 102). Hawthorne makes a link between the drawing of energy from Rome (‘breathing its enchanted air’) and the sharing of that energy between artists who ‘find themselves in force’. In *The Marble Faun*, these ‘artists are conscious of a social warmth from each other’s presence’ (103); in the *Notebooks*, they ‘care little about one another’s work, yet they keep each other warm by the presence of so many of them’ (78). Central to this gathering is an ‘eminent sculptor’ (a portrait presumably based on John Gibson, given the description of an ‘elderly personage’ who had ‘robbed the marble of its chastity, by giving it an artificial warmth of hue’). The sculptor is surrounded by younger artists, who ‘drank in his wisdom, as if it would serve all the purposes of original inspiration’ (*Marble Faun*, 104-5). This is a depiction of inspiration that can be drawn both from the city and from other artists, and moves freely between them.

The ‘Eternal City’ of Rome was thought of, conveniently and paradoxically as simultaneous open and closed. The city was porous and accessible: open enough that visitors could enter it in order to access its energy and artistic resources, and porous enough that movement between the Campagna and the city was easy and

frequent. However, Rome was simultaneously imagined as a closed system in which that energy could be eternally recycled. Richard Lehan argues that, ‘the city is a closed system’, in which ‘nothing provides it energy outside itself.’<sup>142</sup> This was experienced literally by the expatriate artists in Rome, whose understanding of the exceptionalism of the city already informed a heightened awareness of the city’s walls and the conception of Rome as an independent city state.

Artists came to Rome with the specific idea of taking something from the city. This was frequently figured in terms of breathing Rome’s air: James described ‘the young Americans aspiring to paint, to build and to carve,’ who were ‘gasping at home for vital air’ and came to Rome where the air was variously, ‘clear blue’ and ‘golden.’ Hawthorne’s expatriate characters in *The Marble Faun* are, ‘breathing [Rome’s] enchanted air’, and Hawthorne himself wrote in his *Notebooks*, that ‘I have been in Rome long enough to be imbued with its atmosphere’ (512). These metaphors are suggestive of the way expatriates conceived of Rome as containing an atmosphere, or element, to be consumed, inhaled, or harvested. Wrigley’s exploration of influence and the movement of ideas in nineteenth-century Rome in terms of contagion finds in the Roman Campagna’s notoriously malarial air a model suggestive not only of the spread of disease but also of ideas: he argues that ‘ideas of influence should be [...] rethought in contextual terms, acting through an ambient, immersive dimension’ (*Roman Fever*, 2). The focus by expatriate artists on breathing Rome’s air, however, refers not only to awareness of the spread of disease, but also to a sense that Rome offered something both abstract and substantial—artistic energy—that artists could consume. Clark relates the idea of inspiration to that of breath, noting that, ‘In its Latin etymology the word comports the notion of breathing, or an empowering breath or “spirit”, the communication of a sounding energy or power of speech’ (3). Thus, the expatriate focus on breathing Roman air is one related to the idea of accessing energy within the closed system of the city, as much as it is to one of both artistic and dangerous air-borne contagion. The notion of a closed system was, however, also linked to ideas of entropy, which in the Roman context frequently leant on the idea of ‘Roman Fever’ and the city’s ‘bad air’: MacDuffie finds that ‘the city in the

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<sup>142</sup> Richard Lehan, *The City in Literature: An Intellectual and Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 123.

nineteenth-century imaginary [...] was a bounded space irreversibly consuming its own energy and suffocating in its own detritus and waste heat' (8).

Entropy was a paradoxical source of inspiration and anxiety. While the expatriate response to entropy in Rome as perceived in terms of decay and loss is discussed below, its inspirational force was motivational to their projects as artists. Entropy had, Thomson argued, a creative element: 'As it is most certain that Creative Power alone can either call into existence or annihilate mechanical energy,' waste 'cannot be annihilation, but must be some transformation of energy.'<sup>143</sup> Expatriate artists in Rome who made art using Roman energy were conducting, in this sense, an anti-entropic project. The process of making art was one of 'transformation' that required, in Hawthorne's words, the 'artist's force of thought' (*Notebooks*, 130). The power of successful new artworks is distinctly energetic: Miriam's perception in *The Marble Faun* of Kenyon's *Cleopatra* is of 'a great smouldering furnace deep down in the woman's heart [...]. [S]uch was the creature's latent energy and fierceness, she might spring upon you like a tigress' (98). The statue, like the city of Rome, is a vessel of energy and a site of potential, ready to come to life like the sleeping gods of Heine's story.

In coining the term 'entropy', Rudolph Clausius looked to 'the ancient languages' for a root, so that the word 'may mean the same thing in all living tongues.' He chose 'entropy' after the Greek word 'transformation': 'In the name of entropy, energetic and linguistic transformation became metaphors for each other, and the discursive path was further cleared for loose figurative extensions of thermodynamic ideas from the scientific to the cultural arena', argues Bruce Clarke. These 'loose figurative extensions', Clarke writes, ranged from the 'psychological' to the 'moral'.<sup>144</sup> When Hawthorne first published *The Marble Faun* in Britain, it was under the title *Transformation*, making the novel itself a 'loose figurative extension' of thermodynamics into art. That the term 'transformation' is key both to the nineteenth-century expatriate experience of Rome, and to discussions of the movement of energy, is more than a useful semantic coincidence. *Transformation* as a title for Hawthorne's

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<sup>143</sup> William Thomson, 'On a Universal Tendency in Nature to the Dissipation of Mechanical Energy,' in *Mathematical and Physical Papers*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1882), p. 511.

<sup>144</sup> Bruce Clarke, 'Allegories of Victorian Thermodynamics,' *Configurations*, 4, no. 1 (Winter 1996) 67-90, p. 74.

novel can be read as a reference to various of its concerns—describing Donatello’s journey from innocence into sin, the statue of the Faun of Praxiteles into a living counterpart, or Kenyon’s work of transforming life into art, for example—but when considered a synonym for entropy, it signals an idea that underpins the entire novel and brings together all the other minor transformations that take place. This idea, in its simplest form, is that Rome is a site of the transformation of artistic energy and entropy; it draws on the dual meanings of entropy as a synonym for change in a neutral sense, and for decay (moral, physical, artistic).

Henry James’ *William Wetmore Story and His Friends*, written after Story’s death and half a century after the network of expatriate artists in Rome was at its most vibrant, is suffused with the idea that what was special about Rome has been lost.

Thirty years ago, and later, in any case, the place was there still, but with that indescribable golden air about it (according to my faded impression) of a paradise closed and idle, where the petals of the Roman roses in the spring, all ungathered, might be thick on the Roman walks, where happiness unmistakably *had* been. (132)

As in contemporary accounts, James leans on the phrase ‘golden air’ to describe the energetic quality of Rome. He identifies the city as ‘a paradise closed’, invoking the entropic ‘Paradise Lost’ while also leaning on the idea of the city of Rome as the ‘closed system’ on which the laws of thermodynamics depend, and within which entropy has ‘tend[ed] to a maximum’. This passage contains a tension between the ‘closed’ nature of the system, the renewal of both nature and history (‘petals of Roman roses in the spring’) and the sense of loss nonetheless: a ‘faded impression’, the pluperfection of ‘happiness’. James grapples with the sense both of energy within an ‘eternal’ city, and its transformation, which he cannot help but describe in terms of loss and waste. He reports Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s entropy-infused response to the death of Margaret Fuller that, ‘change could not be loss to her’, whilst simultaneously describing the death as a ‘loss’ (147). When James writes about Rome in *William Wetmore Story and His Friends*, he writes about entropy.

This thesis breaks down the expatriate artistic community’s engagement with Roman energy into three distinct areas: mining, manufacture and spiritualism. The first chapter, ‘Rome the Mine’, examines the ways in which expatriates in Rome set about gaining access to Roman energy through material encounters with and within

the city. Just as Rome was perceived as a vessel of energy, so too were Roman art objects, and as such, for the expatriate artists who came to Rome to practice and make new art, a resource to be exploited. The chapter considers expatriate artists' responses to Roman things in the context Benjamin's conception of aura and debates within thing theory regarding the narrative qualities of things. Expatriate artists' enthusiasm for accessing the energy of ancient objects was frequently applied to the archaeological digs that proliferated around Rome through the century, and which contributed to an experience of Rome as a mine. Expatriate artists responded to anxiety regarding the depletion of artistic resources, which echoed those regarding soil and fossil fuel depletion, by formulating archaeology as a creative rather than destructive practice. The chapter applies this reading to narratives of excavation: Henry James' *The Last of the Valerii* (1874), Story and Hawthorne's accounts of excavation in the Campagna, and *The Marble Faun's* treatment of the emergence of the Model from the catacombs.

The second chapter, 'Rome the Factory', considers the methods of reproduction and copying employed by expatriate artists who aimed to 'recycle' Roman energy. The expatriate artists who moved to Rome in order to access Roman energy for their own work engaged in vigorous debate around the notions of originality, authenticity and copying. A ghost story told by Elizabeth Gaskell is recycled by three other artists; the debate between Gaskell and Dickens regarding the ownership of the story illuminates a perception of Roman energy as communal and fluid. The understanding of Roman energy as a form of inspiration was undermined by this concept of recycling energy; energy cannot be created, merely transformed or transferred, and as such the appropriate term for the work of artists in Rome is 'making' rather than 'creating'. To engage with art in Rome during this period was to engage with multiple levels of copying, and thus the work expatriates produced in and about the city was itself preoccupied with questions of authenticity and replication. The idea of repetition is common to the overall project of recycling energy, to the goals and process of making neoclassical sculpture, and to the experience of writers within mass and print cultures. Benjamin's argument regarding the loss of aura in mechanical reproduction is complicated by the practice by members of the expatriate community, most notably Peabody Hawthorne, of a form of 'spiritual copying' that could translate Roman energy, which carried with it the artwork's aura, between old and new works without diminishing it.



In the third chapter, 'Rome the Séance', the idea of 'spiritual copying' is related to more overt spiritual practices within the expatriate community. Spiritualism sought to counteract the inevitability of entropy, and was thus attractive to expatriate artists whose project of making art relied on a continuous flow of accessible energy. Spiritualism was widely practiced in Rome, where the flow and interaction of British and American artists consolidated it as a transatlantic phenomenon. Story, Harriet Hosmer, Hiram Powers and the Brownings all used spiritualist practice in ways that related to their role as artists and producers of art: it was a medium through which Roman artistic energy could not only be accessed and channelled, but materialized. Art produced from this spiritualist context, most significantly Harriet Hosmer's *Clasped Hands of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning* (1853), sought to evoke the transmissive and anti-entropic powers of the artist. This, finally, is explored in relation to the myth of Pygmalion and Galatea, which informed works of spiritualist art that aimed not only to recycle energy but reverse entropy by imbuing 'life' into their art. Artists who were able to access Roman energy were mediums whose project was to resurrect lost energy, and to bring their works to life.

The conclusion considers, via Henry James' biography of the expatriate artistic community of the mid century, *William Wetmore Story and His Friends*, the legacy of the expatriate artistic community. An exploration of the shifting meaning of the term 'ghost' from a notion of lingering presence to a manifestation of absence informs a reading of James' biography as an investigation of the relationship between loss, energy and interconnection. The conclusion contextualises the works produced by engagement with Roman energy in the mid century within the circulation of ideas, texts and images across the Atlantic throughout the nineteenth century. Rome, with its particular facilitation of exchange, was a triangulating point of transatlantic encounter.

## Chapter One

### Rome the Mine: Excavating, Accessing and Harnessing Artistic Energy

A farm, however far pushed, will under proper cultivation continue to yield for ever a constant crop. But in a mine there is no reproduction, and the produce once pushed to the utmost will soon begin to fail and sink towards zero.

William Stanley Jevons, *The Coal Question*<sup>1</sup>

We are moved by things. And in being moved, we make things.

Sara Ahmed, 'Happy Objects'<sup>2</sup>

#### I. 'OBJECTS OF CURIOSITY': MATERIAL ENCOUNTERS IN ROME

##### The Discovery of the Porta Portese *Venus*

On April 13<sup>th</sup> 1859, Nathaniel Hawthorne, William Wetmore Story, Emelyn Story and Hamilton Wilde made a trip to the Roman Campagna to view a new archaeological discovery. The *Morning Post*'s correspondent in Rome reported local interest in a 'lovely statue of Venus which was discovered in a vineyard, on Friday week, half a mile beyond the Porta Portese, at a depth of 40 palms below the surface'.<sup>3</sup>

The *Morning Chronicle* detailed the circumstances of the find:

It seems that the proprietor of a vineyard outside the Porta Portese [...] had the extraordinary good fortune to come upon a most beautiful Venus, of the very highest order of Grecian art, almost similar in action to the celebrated Venus de Medicis [sic], and nearly perfect [...] Indeed, the beholder is amazed, not only at the beauty, but at the lifelike reality of every form; and as proof of its truth to nature, you can see that the great number of uninitiated admire and appreciate it,

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<sup>1</sup> William Stanley Jevons, *The Coal Question* (London: Macmillan, 1906), pp. 154-155. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>2</sup> Sara Ahmed, 'Happy Objects', *The Affect Theory Reader*, ed. by Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), pp. 29-51 (p. 33). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>3</sup> 'Affairs of Rome—Antiquarian Discoveries', *Morning Post*, 22 April 1859, p. 5.

for it is only nature after all that will move the masses. This noble statue is but little mutilated; the right hand, the fingers of the left, and the end of the nose, being the only losses it has suffered.<sup>4</sup>

The statue, presented in the context of the vineyard in which it was discovered, is treated in both newspaper accounts as an alternative crop: it is a secondary product of the Roman Campagna, more valuable than the grapes the land was cultivated to yield. Comparison between the new Venus and the Venus de Medici highlights the tension between novelty and familiarity, discovery and recognition, that dominated discourse around new archaeological discoveries in Rome: just as the vineyards of the Italian countryside produced grape harvests of varying quality, so too did the land produce works of art that varied in calibre, condition and value. The *Morning Chronicle*'s focus on the statue's relationship to nature, while on the surface engaging with the on-going contemporary artistic debate regarding 'Nature and Art',<sup>5</sup> thus also touched on secondary questions: to what extent the surfacing of ancient artworks was part of the 'natural' cycle of Roman energy, and conversely, to what extent the increasingly intense excavation of the Roman Campagna was depleting a finite resource. In other words, was Rome, for the expatriates who went there to excavate and access its buried artworks, a farm, or a mine?

In their subsequent accounts of their encounter with the statue, both Story and Hawthorne emphasized, as did the author of the *Morning Chronicle* article, 'the lifelike reality' of the *Venus*, but in Story and Hawthorne's accounts, this verisimilitude is presented as a process rather than a fixed state. In Story's *Roba di Roma*, he noted that 'the head and arms [of the *Venus*] were wanting, but these also were found the next day'; the statue then appeared, 'Just risen, not from the sea but from the earth, somewhat grimed by the dirt in which she had made her bed for centuries, and with her arms and head lying on the ground by her side' (320). In his *Notebooks*, Hawthorne wrote of finding 'a headless marble figure, earth-stained, of course, and with a slightly corroded surface, but wonderfully delicate and beautiful'

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<sup>4</sup> 'Another Venus de Medicis', *Morning Chronicle*, 26 April 1859, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Story wrote extensively in his notebooks on this subject, defending art as an extension rather than an imitation of nature. See 'Art is Art Because it is Not Nature', Handwritten Manuscript, Undated, Box 2, Folder: Works 3 of 8, Story Family Papers, MS-4065, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin [hereafter, 'Story Family Papers, Ransom Center'].

(516). The accounts describe, in similar detail, the experience of watching the ancient statue emerging and becoming whole, and though both writers witnessed the statue's uncovering rather than its initial disinterment, this experience is treated as an emergence, or resurgence, from the earth. The 'lifelike' statue is brought to life before their eyes, as the proprietor places the head back on the body, and action that 'seemed immediately to light up and vivify the entire figure' (516). The impression was profound enough that Hawthorne re-used the material in *The Marble Faun*, in a scene in which, marking the beginning of the novel's denouement, the sculptor Kenyon discovers 'a headless figure of marble' that was 'earth-stained, as well it might be, and had a slightly corroded surface, but at once impressed the sculptor as a Greek production, and wonderfully delicate and beautiful' (328). By describing and re-describing a process of becoming whole, rather than the discovery of a static object, Story and Hawthorne's accounts participate in the vivification of the statue, bringing it to life in a broader sense by retelling the story in their accounts.

This chapter takes the encounter between Story, Hawthorne and the Porta Portese Venus, and the artists' subsequent narration of it, as the starting point for an exploration of expatriate engagement with Rome's excavated things in the middle of the nineteenth century. Artists' experience of Rome was one defined by its things, which, like the city itself, were experienced as vessels of artistic energy. These encounters thus contributed to the perception of Rome as an energetic resource for expatriate artists. This chapter is concerned with the models of access to and exploitation of this, and how artists' conception of the city as a mine shaped their relationship with energetic Roman things, and thus Roman energy. The first section of the chapter examines the nature of the expatriate encounter with Roman things and explores the context and influences that informed a perception of things as vessels. By reading nineteenth-century responses to Roman things through the lens of twenty-first century thing theory, which offers a framework for examining the meaningfulness of things, this chapter establishes the expatriate engagement with Roman things as one preoccupied with access and methods of exploiting artistic energy in new work. This chapter locates Roman artistic energy within Roman things, finding that expatriate artists' perception of art objects as affective and meaningful—perceptions that were expressed in energetic terms—drew from the presence of, and practices surrounding, Catholic relics in Rome.

A perception of Rome as a mine arose from awareness of Roman things as vessels of energy, and of archaeology as a means of accessing it. Anxieties regarding the depletion of resources, aligned with the ongoing debate regarding the use and depletion of fossil fuels in industrial mining, arose as developments in archaeological technologies led to more numerous and more successful excavation of artefacts. Expatriate artists responded to this anxiety by formulating archaeology as a creative rather than destructive practice. Ruskin's *Munera Pulveris* (1863) identified 'vital power' as a quality of art that was independent of, and outlasted, its exchange or labour value, and thus provided a model for artistic production in Rome that sought to harness artistic energy without depleting it. Narratives of excavation such as Story and Hawthorne's accounts of the Porta Portese *Venus*, Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*, and Henry James' *The Last of the Valerii*, explore the relationship between the excavated thing and the artist who works to incorporate its energy into new work.

## **Roman Things**

'It is not with feelings such as we view other objects of curiosity, that we look upon Rome,' wrote Charlotte Eaton, in her preface to *Rome in the Nineteenth Century* (1820). 'We visit it with something of the same veneration with which we should approach the sepulchre of a parent. All that distinguished it once is laid, in dust, but the very soil on which we tread is sacred ground'.<sup>6</sup> Rome was an 'object of curiosity', but an exceptional one because, Eaton argues, it was resonant with the significance of its past: 'all that distinguished [Rome] once' is held within Roman objects that in turn imbue the city with the same meaningfulness as that of 'the sepulchre of a parent', a suggestion that speaks to both Italy's status as the 'foundation [...] of modern western civilisation',<sup>7</sup> and to the degree to which Roman things were experienced as spiritual, even by protestant visitors. 'No place in the universe,' stated Thomas Nugent of Rome

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<sup>6</sup> Charlotte Eaton, *Rome in the Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable & Co., 1820), p. xii. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>7</sup> Alison Chapman and Jane Stabler, p. 3.

in his eighteenth-century guide to the Grand Tour, ‘affords so agreeable a variety of ancient and modern curiosities.’<sup>8</sup> Eaton’s preface establishes Rome as a city composed of meaningful things; the city is an ‘object of curiosity’ because it is itself composed of ‘objects of curiosity’. Eaton justifies the publication of her book with the suggestion that, of all previously published accounts of Rome, ‘there is not one that contains any account of its antiquities, that can satisfy the antiquary [...] or any general information respecting its multiplied objects of curiosity and admiration, that can gratify the common inquirer’ (vi). To understand Rome was to understand its objects, and its objects were exceptional, as this chapter will show, because their history and meaningfulness were imagined by expatriate artists as artistic energy.

Preoccupation with Roman things was still prevalent in writings of the mid century. The 1857 edition of *Murray’s Guide* recommended a ‘rapid review of the leading ruins’ to visitors on first arrival in Rome, which would enable them ‘to understand the age of the different monuments’ and would make clear ‘the chronological succession to such travellers as wish to study the history of Rome by means of her existing ruins’.<sup>9</sup> Story’s own guidebook to the city was titled *Roba di Roma*, which translates as ‘Roman stuff’ or ‘Roman things’: ‘We have no term so comprehensive in English. “Roba” is everything—from rubbish and riff-raff to the most exquisite product of art and nature. This book is filled with “Roba”’ (v). Story’s title rehabilitates the notorious ‘stuff’ of Rome, described in Arthur Hugh Clough’s *Amours de Voyage* (1862) as ‘rubbishy’, by drawing a connecting line between ‘riff-raff’ and Rome’s art objects (Clough, 3). As in Eaton’s writing, then, in both Murray’s guidebook and Story’s, Rome was a collection of objects through the study of which the city could be understood.

Both Story and Hawthorne’s accounts of Rome evoke a city brimming with things. In his *Notebooks*, Hawthorne records that ‘[y]ou cannot dig six feet downward anywhere into the soil, deep enough to hollow out a grave, without finding some precious relic of the past’ (201). These ‘relics’ resurface in *The Marble Faun*: the

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<sup>8</sup> Thomas Nugent, quoted in Andrew Szegedy-Maszak, ‘A Perfect Ruin: Nineteenth-Century Views of the Colosseum’, *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 2, no. 1 (1992), pp. 115-42 (p. 116). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>9</sup> *A Handbook for Travellers in Central Italy, Part II: Rome and its Environs*, Fourth Edition (London: John Murray, 1857), p. 17. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

‘great thigh bone’ he ‘saw and handled’ in a tomb, is transported into the catacombs in the novel, where ‘there might perchance be a thigh-bone...’ (21); the sarcophagi that, in the *Notebooks*, ‘could not now be put to a more appropriate use than as wine-coolers in a modern dining-room’ in the novel become ‘a receptacle for the rubbish of the courtyard, and a half-worn broom’ (*Notebooks*, 203; *Marble Faun*, 31). Story describes how visitors ‘slide into the world of dreams, as you kick over the bits of marble with which the grass is strewn, or pluck the wild flowers that picture the sod and glow among the ruins’ (*Roba*, 354). Both accounts depict the collision of the present and the past brought about by Roman things. These things are ‘handled’ and ‘kicked’ by the visitor, or converted from their original purpose to serve a new one; Rome is a site of interaction between the visitor, the city’s plentiful ‘objects of curiosity’ and the associated meanings and functions they suggest.

Elaine Freedgood, in her introduction to *The Ideas in Things*, argues that ‘we have learned to understand [things in Victorian novels] as largely meaningless: the protocols for reading the realist novel have long focused us on the subjects and plots; they have implicitly enjoined us *not* to interpret many or most of its objects.’<sup>10</sup> In part, Freedgood suggests, this is because ‘objects are largely inconsequential in the rhetorical hierarchy of the text’ (2). Freedgood finds that, of the objects she considers in her study, that ‘their “objectness,” was highly consequential in the world in which the text was produced. Accordingly, the knowledge that is stockpiled in these things bears on the grisly specifics of conflicts and conquests that a culture can neither regularly acknowledge nor permanently destroy’ (2).

Story and Hawthorne’s writing on Roman things, however, demonstrates an awareness of and interest in exposing the ‘grisly specifics of conflicts and conquests’ that is ‘stockpiled’ in Roman things that they encounter, perhaps in part because, as writers in the role of antiquarians they are exposing a culture removed by centuries from their own. They assume the role of critic in relation to the things of Rome, as Freedgood does in relation to the writing of the nineteenth century.

Roman things are centrally positioned in Story and Hawthorne’s writing on the city; rather than being ‘inconsequential in the rhetorical hierarchy of the text’, they

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<sup>10</sup> Elaine Freedgood, *The Ideas in Things: Fugitive Meaning in the Victorian Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 1. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

are treated as vitally meaningful, and the vehicle by which the city and its history is to be explored and understood. *Roba di Roma* makes explicit this relationship:

You pick up among the ruins on every slope fragments of rich marbles that once encased the walls of luxurious villas. The *contadino* or shepherd offers you a worn coin, on which you read the name of Caesar; or a *scaraboeus* which once adorned the finger of an Etruscan king, in whose dust he now grows his beans; or the broken head of an ancient jar in marble or terra-cotta, or a lacrymatory of a martyred Christian, or a vase with the Etrurian red that now is lost, or an *intaglio* that perhaps has sealed a love-letter a thousand years ago. (314)

Here, Roman things are positioned at the very top of the ‘rhetorical hierarchy of the text’. Each object is presented alongside its history and meaning; the syntax indicates the impossibility of separating the two: the ‘worn coin’ and the ‘name of Caesar’; the ‘*scaraboeus*’ and the ‘Etruscan king’. The sentences stack clause upon clause in a way that reflects both the density of things in Rome and the density of meaning found within them.

Bill Brown identifies this meaningfulness as the key difference, or relationship, between objects and things, defining things

as what is excessive in objects, as what exceeds their mere materialization as objects or their mere utilization as objects—their force as a sensuous presence or as a metaphysical presence [...]. Temporalized as the before and after of the object, thingness amounts to a latency (the not yet formed or the not yet formable) and to an excess (what remains physically or metaphysically irreducible to objects).<sup>11</sup>

Story and Hawthorne’s engagement with Roman things follows Brown’s formulation in this sense: for Story and Hawthorne Roman things exceed both ‘materialization’—‘bits of marble’ evoke ‘the world of dreams’—and ‘utilization’: sarcophagi could be repurposed, according to Hawthorne, as ‘wine-coolers in a modern dining-room’, a suggestion that indicates both the durability of the ‘metaphysical presence’ of the

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<sup>11</sup> Bill Brown, ‘Thing Theory’, *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Things (Autumn 2011), pp.1-22 (p. 5). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.



thing, and the extent to which the meaning of an object can become detached from its original purpose (*Roba*, 354; *Notebooks*, 203).

However, Roman things differ somewhat from Brown's formulation in their relationship to time. Brown's argument continues: 'this temporality obscures the all-at-onceness, the simultaneity, of the object/thing dialectic and the fact that, all at once, the thing seems to name the object just as it is even as it names something else' (5). What Brown conceives of as the 'all-at-onceness, the simultaneity,' of things is demonstrated by Roman things, which express the simultaneous co-existence of Rome's past and present. However, this 'all-at-onceness' is not 'obscured' so much as highlighted and spelt out by the narrative quality of Roman things, which invites contextualisation of the present moment in relation to Rome's long history (Story's 'scaraboeus which once adorned the finger of an Etruscan king, in whose dust he now grows his beans', for example) and also enables writers to use things within narratives to play dramatic as well as descriptive functions. In Madame de Staël's *Corinne* (1807), Roman ruins are an 'emblem of the years which have made them what they are';<sup>12</sup> this perception was maintained by the visitors of the mid century, by whom *Corinne* was widely read, and is echoed well into the second half of the century by Henry James who wrote of excavations that '[i]t gives one the oddest feeling to see the past, the ancient world, as one stands there, bodily turned up with the spade, and transformed from an immaterial, inaccessible fact of time into a matter of soils and surfaces' (*Transatlantic Sketches*, 118).<sup>13</sup> In these imaginings, the existence of the ancient thing has a solidifying effect on the viewer's understanding of time: the immaterial 'fact of time' is transformed, made concrete, to the extent that *Murray's Guide* recommends using Roman things as a means to understanding 'the chronological succession' of the city.

Roman things in the writing of Story and Hawthorne behave not as the time-collapsing, object-obscuring talismans formulated by Brown, but as dramatic devices that make explicit the relationship between past and present, and the shifting context and meaning of things over narrative time. Thus, as Nicholas Thomas writes,

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<sup>12</sup> Anne Louise Germaine de Staël, *Corinne; or Italy*, trans. by Isabel Hill (New York: Albert Mason, 1874) p. 147.

<sup>13</sup> See William L. Vance, Vol. 1, p. 70, for details regarding the wide readership of *Corinne*.

insistence upon the fact that objects pass through social transformations effects a deconstruction of the essentialist notion that the identity of material things is fixed in their structure and form. Hence, although certain influential theorists of material culture have stressed the objectivity of the artefact, I can only recognize the reverse: the mutability of things in recontextualization.<sup>14</sup>

This ‘recontextualization’ is seen in James’ description of a convent beside ‘eight time-blackened columns of granite’ and whose walls themselves narrate the chronology of its past: ‘It begins, as so many things in Rome begin, with a stout foundation of antique travertine, and rises high, in delicately quaint medieval brickwork’ (*Transatlantic Sketches* 121, 122). The progression of time is written upon the walls of the thing. Dickens, too, observed the length of history in recontextualised Roman things in *Pictures from Italy*: ‘it is strange to see, how every fragment [...] has been blended into some modern structure, and made to serve some modern purpose—a wall, a dwelling-place, a granary, a stable’ (201). Roman things narrate time—narrate, in fact, their own ‘recontextualisation’—in such a way as to show the ‘image’ and ‘fact’ of time as ‘matter’. Alex Potts relates this phenomenon directly to the form of sculpture, arguing that ‘the kinaesthetic viewing activated by three-dimensional work brings with it a heightened sense of temporality. [...] Our sense of the whole is partly defined through the ever changing and variously focused partial views we have of it, and can never entirely be condensed into a single stable image’ (9). In the ‘exhibition space’ of Rome, as it was experienced by tourists and expatriate artists, the three-dimensional space meant that all art objects, both painting and sculpture, were experienced with a multiple temporality.

In *The Marble Faun*, the ‘mutable,’ narrative quality of Roman things is used to develop plot at key moments. The meaningfulness of things is debated by the four main characters in the catacombs, where they encounter the thigh-bone transplanted from the *Notebooks* beside ‘a skull, grinning at its own wretched plight, as is the ugly and empty habit of the thing’ (21). The sight of these anthropomorphized bones prompts a conversation about ghosts, which are treated in the narrative as a manifestation of the ‘excessive’ meaning contained within things. Donatello is ‘terribly afraid’ of ghosts in the catacombs (22). Miriam, conversely, argues that

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<sup>14</sup> Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 28.

‘these sepulchres are so old, and these skulls and white ashes so very dry, that methinks they have ceased to be haunted’ (22). This interrogation of the apparent ‘emptiness’ of the skull engages with the tension Hawthorne perceived in Roman things between physical emptiness and figurative meaningfulness, and signals the significance of the position of things in chronological time. The meaning of the bones has, according to Miriam, shifted over time from ‘haunted’ thing to ‘dry’ artefact. This argument is silently resolved by the narrative, rather than the characters, when Miriam disappears in the catacombs, then re-emerges with the Model: variously described as ‘a phantom’ and a ‘spectre’ that ‘shap[es] himself [...] suddenly out of the void darkness of the catacomb,’ much in the way that James’ ruins are ‘transformed from an immaterial, inaccessible fact’ into ‘matter’ (*Transatlantic Sketches*, 26).

“What are you?” said the sculptor, advancing his torch nearer.  
 “And how long have you been wandering here?”  
 “A thousand and five hundred years!” muttered the guide [...] . (26)

By depicting the Model as a Roman thing, Hawthorne shows the very emptiness of Roman things to be meaningful, as he directs his characters themselves to interrogate it in the context of its transformation over time. Rather than indicating Brown’s ‘all-at-onceness’ then, things here are used both to draw attention to the narrative quality of time that they contain, and the power of meaning to endure, change, or strengthen through time. Hawthorne’s positioning of *The Marble Faun* as a ‘romance’ rather than a realist novel allows him to make use of the genre’s tendency to ‘veer toward mythic, allegorical, and symbolistic forms’<sup>15</sup> that enable him to prioritise the meaningfulness of things and thus circumvent ‘the protocols for reading the realist novel [that] have long focused us on the subjects and plots’ identified by Freedgood (1). *The Marble Faun* exploits the narrative element of Roman things by using them as plot devices in their own right.

In exploiting the narrative potential of Roman things in their writing, Hawthorne and Story engage with Benjamin’s notion of ‘aura’: ‘The authenticity of

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<sup>15</sup> Richard Chase, *The American Novel and its Tradition* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), p. 13.

a thing is the essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning, ranging from its substantive duration to its testimony to the history which it has experienced.’<sup>16</sup> Key to the ‘essence’ of the work of art is its ‘historical testimony’: its expression, or transmission, of the full length of time that passes between the life of the *scaraboeus*-wearing Etruscan king and that of the farmer who ‘grows his beans’ in the king’s ‘dust’; the ‘thousand and five hundred years’ that go by between the death of a martyr and the ghostly ‘Model’ rising from the catacombs.

### Relics, Art and Storage

‘There are sermons in stones,’ says Hilda in *The Marble Faun*, ‘and especially in the stones of Rome’ (117). The unique treatment of Roman things, and particularly Roman art objects, in the mid-nineteenth century built upon a precedent of encountering spiritually meaningful things in Rome. What Hawthorne referred to as ‘relic[s] of the past’, were experienced by protestant visitors as secular versions of the religious relics that filled Roman Catholic places of worship and to which protestant visitors to Rome were frequently exposed (201). Eaton’s assertion that Rome’s ‘objects of curiosity’ should receive the same ‘veneration’ as ‘the sepulchre of a parent’ was informed by the material culture of Catholicism, which held that ‘material things—saints’ graves, relics, icons, the Eucharist—had sacred force independent of any collective action or conveyed meaning’.<sup>17</sup> ‘There is no better exemplar of Bill Brown’s “thing theory”’, argues Patricia Cox Miller, ‘than a relic.’

As a specifically *spiritual* object, a relic is a mere object, a body part of a dead human being, that has become a ‘thing’ because it can no longer be taken for granted as part of the everyday world of the naturalized environment of the death and decay of the human body. In antiquity, the relic as thing was a locus of surplus value: because it was

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<sup>16</sup> Walter Benjamin, ‘The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction’, in *Illuminations*, trans. by Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), pp. 217-252 (p. 221). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>17</sup> Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image* (London: Reaktion Book, 2004), p. 92.

a vehicle for the mediation of divine presence in human life—that is to say, a crucial nodal point linking the transcendent and earthly realms—a relic was both the facilitator as well as a signifier of a belief system in which the concept of intercession placed spiritual power squarely in the midst of the material world.<sup>18</sup>

The role of the relic as ‘a crucial nodal point linking the transcendent and earthly realms’ was interrogated and absorbed by protestant visitors to Rome whose own religious tradition rejected the notion of the spiritual object as a ‘mediat[or] of divine presence in human life’. This section explores the extent to which the Catholic practice of engaging with sacred things as meaningful and affective influenced the expatriate Protestant understanding of secular Roman things as vessels of artistic energy.

The inherent ambivalence of the protestant encounter with Catholic relics is reflected in accounts of spiritual Roman things that move between confusion, disdain and empathy. Dickens’ depictions of relics in *Pictures from Italy* range from the grotesque, ‘grid-iron of Saint Lawrence, and the stone below it, marked with the frying of his fat and blood,’ to the absurd: ‘a little wooden doll, in face very like General Tom Thumb the American Dwarf: gorgeously dressed in satin and gold lace, and actually blazing with rich jewels’ (186, 178). Jane Stabler notes that in his writing on churches in Italy, ‘Dickens suggests that Catholicism breeds a suffocating materiality’, evidenced by ‘relentless descriptions of carpets, sashes, canopies, parasols, and coverings’ (89). When Dickens presents a more engaged and spiritual impression of relics, he emphasizes their abstract qualities above, or at least beyond, their material presence. St. Mark’s Basilica in Venice was

redolent of perfumes; dim with the smoke of incense; costly in treasure of precious stones and metals, glittering through iron bars; holy with the bodies of deceased saints; rainbow hued with windows of stained glass; dark with carved woods and coloured marbles; obscure in its vast heights and lengthened distances; shining with silver lamps and winking lights; unreal, fantastic, solemn, inconceivable throughout. (110)

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<sup>18</sup> Patricia Cox Miller, *The Corporeal Imagination: Signifying the Holy in Late Ancient Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), p. 62. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

This effusion of adjectives, listed with increasing density towards the end of the paragraph, creates an impression of the ‘excessiveness’ of the things in the cathedral that cannot be contained within their material form. Imagery of light and smoke places focus on the immaterial emanating from the material. The structure of the successive juxtaposed clauses links the abstract terms, ‘holy’, ‘fantastic’ and ‘obscure’, to descriptors associated with the physical world: ‘dim’, ‘shining’, ‘dark’. Cox Miller highlights the techniques of ‘juxtaposition and repetition’ used in religious art and the presentation of relics ‘to highlight fragments rather than wholes’: ‘By virtue of these techniques, such fragments became “things” [...]. These fragments took on force as presences both sensuous and metaphysical’ (42). Dickens’ prose employs the same technique of juxtaposing fragments for spiritual affect; ‘the bodies of deceased saints’ fulfil their role as relics by affecting the viewer and stimulating a spiritual response, which in turn affects the Protestant writer’s stylistic choices in his own work.

Sophia Peabody Hawthorne’s *Notes in England and Italy*, reflects a similarly ambivalent relationship to relics she encountered in Rome itself that nonetheless influenced her reception of Roman things more broadly. She encounters ‘small bones, hair, and undistinguishable bits, but I do not know their histories’ (422-3); here, relics lack ‘historical testimony’. However, like Dickens in Venice, Peabody Hawthorne at other times experiences the ‘excessiveness’ of Roman relics in spiritual terms: she describes ‘an exhibition of relics’:

a portion of the true cross, and the handkerchief St. Veronica gave our Saviour to wipe his brow, when he passed, bearing his cross, on the way to Calvary. All we could see at such a distance was a very superb and glittering frame to each of these relics, which seemed to be all gold and precious stones. (285)

Here, the ‘historical testimony’ of each object is given; its aura is expressed as the ‘excessiveness’ (which is, as in Dickens’ description, figured as light) that obscures the material form of the relic. Stabler notes that ‘Italian Catholicism provided [female sight-seers] two conflicting versions of the sublime, one based on absolute political papal authority and one on the transcendent aesthetic possibilities of music, art and communal festive joy.’<sup>19</sup> For Peabody Hawthorne, the ‘transcendent aesthetic

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<sup>19</sup> Jane Stabler, ‘Devotion and diversion: early nineteenth-century British women travellers in Italy and the Catholic Church’, *Unfolding the South*, pp. 15-34 (p.16).

possibilities' of Roman things went on to inform her experience both as a beholder, and as a copyist, which is discussed in the next chapter.

Annabel Jane Wharton, in her study of nineteenth-century Protestants in Palestine, finds that 'long-felt [Protestant] anxieties about Others' *sacra* contaminate their own embrace of a new set of things.'<sup>20</sup> In Rome, the excessiveness and aura of relics 'contaminated' expatriate artists' experience of secular art objects. Equating the power of the relic to that of the art object removed the Catholic element from the experience of being affected by a Roman thing: the 'vitally meaningful' '*roba*' of Rome discussed above. The vision Peabody Hawthorne describes of a 'superb and glittering' frame is one that she applies admiringly and more freely to artworks, rather than relics, that do not conflict with her own religious beliefs. She encounters beautiful 'majestic saints and seers by Lo Spagna': 'divine faces beamed upon us, with the usual sacred bend of the devout heads and forms, so like prayers and praises, infinitely affecting and attractive' (311-2). She describes 'the sunshine that seems gleaming over' the *Bella Donna* (263). These art objects behave like relics, 'superb and glittering'; Peabody Hawthorne applies the spiritual experience of exposure to relics to her understanding of art. In this way, the devotional practices surrounding relics in Roman Catholicism informed and influenced the way that expatriate visitors experienced Roman things, religious and secular alike. As Annamaria Formichella Elsdén argues, Peabody Hawthorne's *Notes* 'argues for the profound communicative potential of visual art', but while Formichella Elsdén argues that in her own art and writing she attempted to 'redeem a historical context that lacks spirituality', Peabody Hawthorne in fact perceived and rehabilitated the spiritual power of relics in the wider context of the energetic power of Roman things (73).

'I believe that magical attitudes toward images are just as powerful in the modern world as they were in so-called ages of faith,'<sup>21</sup> writes W. J. T. Mitchell. In mid-nineteenth-century Rome, these 'magical attitudes toward images' not only echoed but developed from the 'faith' that believed in the 'sacred force' of the relic.<sup>22</sup> Benjamin identifies this relationship as key to understanding the nature of aura: 'We

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<sup>20</sup> Annabel Jane Wharton, 'Relics, Protestants, Things', *Material Religion*, Vol.10, Issue 4, 2014, pp. 412–431 (p. 414.)

<sup>21</sup> W. J. T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 8. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>22</sup> Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image*, p. 92.

know that the earliest art works originated in the service of a ritual – first the magical, then the religious kind. [...] [T]he existence of the work of art with reference to its aura is never entirely separated from its ritual function’ (223-4). In the Roman context, this relationship is heightened by the literal juxtaposition in religious spaces of things with ‘ritual function’ and art objects; the aura that is shared by both enables visitors to formulate an experience of works of art that leans on both the language and experience of the Catholic interaction with relics while maintaining an overarching Protestant disavowal of Catholicism. This was, writes Dominic Janes, a ‘theologically driven ideological choice [...] to displace art and visual culture from ostensible concern’ about Catholic idolatry and its perceived materialism.<sup>23</sup>

This relationship occurs even outside of the context of Christian spaces, and to entirely secular works of art. Sara Ahmed describes how

[a]n object can be affective by virtue of its location (the object might be *here*, which is *where* I experience this or that affect) [...] To experience an object as being affective or sensational is to be directed not only toward an object, but to ‘whatever’ is around that object, which includes what is behind the object, the conditions of its arrival. (33)

Ahmed’s notion of affect explains how the Roman Catholic tradition of using affective religious relics informs the affective power of other Roman things, which were often encountered in the same spaces—churches, crypts and cathedrals—as the relics themselves. But it clarifies that the affective power of Roman things draws, too, from the context of the city more broadly. The ‘conditions of [a Roman thing]’s arrival’ therefore include the artistic tradition of the city itself. When Miriam visits Kenyon’s studio in *The Marble Faun*, a bust of Milton is treated as a sanctifying artwork that plays the same role of spiritual preservation as a relic:

[B]y long perusal and deep love of the *Paradise Lost*, [...] the sculptor had succeeded, even better than he knew, in spiritualizing his marble with the poet’s mighty genius. And this was a great thing to have achieved, such a length of time after the dry bones and dust of Milton were like those of any other dead man. (92)

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<sup>23</sup> Dominic Janes, *Victorian Reformation: The Fight over Idolatry in the Church of England, 1840-1860* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 13. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.



Kenyon has transfused ‘the poet’s mighty genius’ into the marble in a process that is described as ‘spiritualizing’. In a Protestant tradition that believes that ‘the dry bones and dust of Milton were like those of any other dead man’, this ‘spiritualizing’ bust nonetheless contains the same power as the bodily remains of a saint might to Roman Catholics.

Just as proximity to and contact with relics inspired and affected the faithful Roman Catholic, so visitors to Rome in the mid century experienced the affective power of secular Roman things. While Dickens conceded that an ‘Exhibition of Relics in St. Peter’s [...] had something effective in it, despite the very preposterous manner in which they were held up for the general edification,’ Peabody Hawthorne finds that, while viewing Domenichino’s *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian*, ‘The longer I looked, the more profoundly I was affected’ (Dickens, 204; Peabody Hawthorne, 205). Peabody Hawthorne’s experience of being affected by an art object that, while spiritual in subject-matter, was not attributed with spiritual power in a formal religious sense, echoes Dickens’ fleeting understanding of the effective role played by relics in religious practices. For Formichella Elsdén, Peabody Hawthorne’s language at this moment ‘indicates [that] art’s emotional impact’ is derived from a communication between ‘the artist’s original inspiration’ and ‘the subjectivity that encounters it’.<sup>25</sup> In this sense, Peabody Hawthorne experiences the ‘thingness’ of the artwork in Bill Brown’s terms: she encounters ‘what is excessive in objects’ and ‘what exceeds their mere materialization as objects or their mere utilization as objects—their force as a sensuous presence or as a metaphysical presence’ (Brown, 5).

This sense of communication between viewer and artist is central to Peabody Hawthorne’s perception of the aura of Roman things. She finds that the ‘entrancing beauty’ of Perugino’s *Saint Columba* ‘transcends mortal capacity, and must have affected the artist as it affects us who look at his work’, making explicit the extent to which the affective power of an art object is derived from its artistic context (318). Formichella Elsdén describes Peabody Hawthorne’s experience of ‘the true power of

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<sup>25</sup> Annamaria Formichella Elsdén, ‘Watery Angels: Sophia Peabody Hawthorne’s Artistic Argument in *Notes in England and Italy*,’ in *Reinventing the Peabody Sisters*, ed. by Monica M. Elbert, Julie E. Hall, Katherine Rodier (Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 2006), pp. 129-144 (133).

art' as 'its ability to transmit divine energy from the artist of the past to the spectator of the future.'<sup>26</sup> In this sense, Roman things act as communication devices for their nineteenth-century viewers. In performing this transmissive role, however, a specific relationship between Roman objects and their aura/historical testimony/meaningfulness/thingness is revealed. While Formichella Elsdén argues that the aura Peabody Hawthorne encounters is '[n]ot located entirely within the artwork itself' but is rather formed by the meeting of 'the artist's original inspiration' and 'the subjectivity that encounters it',<sup>27</sup> the communicative function of the Roman thing necessitates that it functions as storage for meaning.

Bill Brown's description of things 'as what is excessive in objects, as what exceeds their mere materialization as objects', developing Heidegger's examination of 'thingly character' and 'objectness', is suggestive of a relationship in which the thing exists outside or beyond the object.<sup>28</sup> This can be read, too, into the descriptions by Dickens of relics in which light and smoke emanate from the objects as metaphorical aura, and in Peabody Hawthorne's 'superb and glittering frame' that is so bright she cannot see the material relics themselves. However, Roman things' position in relation to historical and cultural context, the specific 'historical testimony' that communicated the passage of time and narrative, meant that they acted primarily as containers of aura. In order to 'transmit divine energy' across centuries, it was necessary for the artwork to store and preserve that energy prior to its transmission. The artwork's role as storage is specified by Peabody Hawthorne in her description of a painting then thought to be by Titian: 'When looking upon the face one involuntarily turns to see whence comes the sunshine that seems gleaming over it [...] I came to discover that the light was not *upon* it, but *within* it' [original emphasis] (263-4).<sup>29</sup>

Descriptions of what Walter Benjamin termed 'aura' were consistently expressed in mid-nineteenth-century expatriate writing in terms of forms of energy.

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<sup>26</sup> Annamaria Formichella Elsdén, 'Watery Angels', p. 133.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>28</sup> Martin Heidegger, 'The Thing', in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 161-185 (p. 165).

<sup>29</sup> The painting identified in the nineteenth century as Titian's *La Bella Donna* is now known to be Palma Vecchio's *La Bella*. See Howard C. Horsford and Lynn Horth (Ed.s), *The Writings of Herman Melville: Journals* (Chicago and Evanston: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 1989) p. 478.

The *Bella Donna* had ‘light [...] within it’; Raphael’s *Entombment* contained ‘force, [...] life, energy, and vividness,’ reminiscent of the ‘sacred force’ of Catholic relics (235). The *Juno Ludoviso* has a ‘controlling energy’ (276). In Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *Notebooks*, Hiram Powers’ *Webster* has a ‘deep pervading energy’ (433). Story’s *Cleopatra* has been conceived with ‘power’ (72); when translated into *The Marble Faun* as Kenyon’s masterpiece, the statue is a ‘smouldering furnace’ with ‘latent energy and fierceness’ (98). Story applies the term to the more recent past, and to literature, noting that Byron’s writing has ‘great energy’, and that Wordsworth’s has ‘great poetic energy’ (*Conversations*, 234; 440). In so doing, Story links the Romantic figures who themselves contributed to the nineteenth-century perception of Rome as a site of artistic energy, as discussed in the introduction, to a specific understanding of Roman things as containers of that energy. What Jane Bennett terms ‘thing-power’, which she defined as ‘material vitality’, the ‘positive, productive power’ of things existed, for expatriate visitors to Rome, in its most literal form: the sense of the power of objects was literally formulated and imagined as energy that could be accessed.<sup>30</sup> The next section examines how this energy was experienced by the expatriate artists and visitors who beheld the Roman things containing it.

### **Experiencing Roman Things**

‘In the old houses where ancestral pictures look constantly down from the walls, they seem still to exercise an influence over the family,’ claims the sculptor, Mallet, in Story’s *Conversations in a Studio*. ‘Those who have grown up among the silent people of Titian, Tintoret, or Vandyck cannot, I fancy, utterly fail to be gentlemen and ladies. Unconscious impressions are made which sink into the soul, and alter life’ (*Conversations*, 9). Exposure to art, Mallet argues, and in particular to Roman art, has a civilising influence. The ‘silent people’ of Roman art communicate not verbally but through an affect that was imagined repeatedly by expatriate artists as a transmission of energy from thing to beholder.

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<sup>30</sup> Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), p. 17, p. 55, p. 1. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

For visitors to Rome, unlike the old Italian families of Mallet's description, the 'impressions' made by the artistic energy of Roman things were experienced consciously rather than unconsciously. The density and ubiquity of powerful Roman things becomes linked in their accounts to a sense of exhaustion. Freedgood notes that tourists experienced the amount and extent of Roman things as excessive, and that 'Rome regularly threatened to overwhelm its Victorian visitors' (132). Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Notebooks* describe the 'torment' of being 'compelled to gaze up at the dark old pictures,—the ugly ghosts of what may once have been beautiful', 'growing a little chiller and chiller through every moment of eternity,— or, at least, till the palace crumbles down' (127). Dickens describes a feeling in Rome that he is 'getting rusty. That any attempt to think, would be accompanied with a creaking noise. That there is nothing, anywhere, to be done, or needing to be done. That there is no more human progress, motion, effort, or advancement, of any kind beyond this. That the whole scheme stopped here centuries ago' (90). At another point in Dickens' narrative he relates this sensation not to the wealth of Roman things, but to its decay: 'The decayed and mutilated paintings [...] [have] a remarkably mournful and depressing influence. It is miserable to see great works of art—something of the Souls of Painters—perishing and fading away, like human forms' (91). As a consequence of these experiences, Freedgood writes, there emerged a 'group of Victorian travel advisers who warn visitors against any headlong engagements with Rome and its stuff' (132).

Freedgood's account of Roman things links their overwhelming effect on British visitors to the specifics of their historical testimony:

The "antique" things threaten at least in part because they carry within them a history—of empire, or republic, of rise, and of fall—about which Victorian Britons were understandably ambivalent: Republican Rome was uncomfortably associated with the French Revolution and a radical republicanism; Imperial Rome, on the other hand, 'insistently proposed itself as a model and a warning in a Britain which had become a consciously if controversially imperial power.' (Freedgood, 132, quoting Norman Vance, 197)

This uncomfortable historical testimony, however, formed only part of the energy contained within Roman things, which was the overarching cause of the visitors' response of ennui or exhaustion. It was not just British visitors, but Americans too,

who brought with them a different cultural context and relationship to notions of empire, who experienced exhaustion, and many writers specifically identified the cause of their fatigue as Roman energy: it was formulated as a kind of short-circuit or electric shock. In being exposed to Roman energy, what visitors experienced was a visceral response to both a perceived excess of energy, and, conversely, the ongoing entropic decay of a city imagined as eternal.

Charlotte Eaton ‘despair[s] of finding words even feebly to describe the objects around me, or give back the faintest image of the various impressions, and the multiplicity of feelings, that [...] overpower me with their force’ (109). For Dorothea in *Middlemarch* (1871),

the long vistas of white forms whose marble eyes seemed to hold the monotonous light of an alien world: all this vast wreck of ambitious ideals, sensuous and spiritual, mixed confusedly with the signs of breathing forgetfulness and degradation, at first jarred her as with an electric shock, and then urged themselves on her with that ache belonging to a glut of confused ideas which check the flow of emotion. Forms both pale and flowing took possession of her young sense, and fixed themselves in her memory even when she was not thinking of them.<sup>31</sup>

The contrast in this passage between the rigidity of the ‘long vistas of white forms’ of marble statues and the ‘sensuous [...] spiritual [...] [f]orms both pale and flowing’ highlights the relationship between Roman energy and the artworks that contain and store it. This is an image of transmission, in which the energy transmitted to Dorothea by Roman things is experienced as an ‘electric shock’.

The transmissive power of Roman energy is described, too, in the active role it takes in overpowering the visitors who view it. The ‘vast wreck’ of Rome acts on Dorothea and ‘wrecks’ her. The overall impression of the chaotic disintegration of both power and matter in *Middlemarch*’s Rome translates to Dorothea’s mental state: ‘Dorothea’s ideas and resolves seemed like melting ice floating and lost in the warm flood of which they had been but another form’ (198). This disintegration and formlessness is presented as the result of the progress of time: ‘the oppressive masquerade of ages’ leads to the reflection, pertinent not only to Dorothea’s marriage

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<sup>31</sup> George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (London: Penguin Books, 1994), p. 193. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

but to the city itself, that ‘whatever else remained the same, the light had changed, and you cannot find the pearly dawn at noonday’ (193; 195). Such is the entropic nature of Dorothea’s impression that Mr. Casaubon’s evocation of the (incorrect) ‘hyperbole’ “‘See Rome and die’” sounds ominous rather than ecstatic: Rome is a city that is falling apart so ruinously that its entropy acts not only on itself but on Dorothea herself (199).

In *Roba di Roma*, Story describes excavations carried out by an archaeologist whose name roughly translates as ‘Mr. Lucky’:

It is but two years ago that Signor Fortunati undertook some excavations on the early Christian church. Scarcely had he struck pick and spade into the earth, when he burst through the roof of two ancient tombs, which for ten centuries had lain there hidden from human eye. There stood the ancient sarcophagi, with the bones of their occupants. (318)

Story’s account here refigures the relationship between archaeologist and archaeological object: in Rome, the ground is so full of antiquity that the objects seem to find Signor Fortunati, rather than the other way around. The archaeologist referenced here is probably Lorenzo Fortunati, who was well-known for the excavations he carried out on the Via Latina between 1857 and 1858, but he also plays the role, in this passage, of the everyman of archaeologists in Rome; all archaeologists in Rome are ‘lucky’.<sup>32</sup> Charlotte Eaton’s complaint that Rome’s ‘excess of matter [...] has paralysed my pen’, formulates a similar relationship between the stuff of Rome and the visitors who come to see it: the things become active subjects that act upon the tourist objects; Eaton’s pen, paralysed, is reduced to an inactive object. Eaton’s own ‘despair of finding words’ to describe the objects of Rome that ‘overpower [her] with their force’ constructs the same relationship again: when faced with the force of Roman energy, the tourist becomes an object, lacking language, overpowered, upon which impressions can be made (109).

Archaeologists Bjørnar Olsen and Þóra Pétursdóttir explore this tension in terms of static and active ideas of ruins, noting

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<sup>32</sup> Filippo Coarelli, *Rome and Environs: An Archaeological Guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), p. 408.

an inherent tendency to see the ruin (noun) as a frozen form, inert and passive, in contrast to the active and transient verbal form (*to ruin*). Our conception of ancient ruins belongs predominantly within the first mode [...]. The ancient ruin is clean, fossilized and terminated; it is somehow ready-ruined. And it is in this stable and ‘finalized’ state that it is cared for, preserved, and admired as heritage.<sup>33</sup>

The active, entropic, ruinous influence of the Roman ruins upon their nineteenth-century visitors complicates this relationship between viewer and object such that these visitors are unable to ‘care for’ and ‘admire as heritage’ Rome’s ancient things, in the way that Olsen and Pétursdóttir describe, but instead have the experience of ruin acted upon them. Dickens’ depression in the face of the ‘decayed and mutilated paintings’ that are ‘perishing and fading away, like human forms,’ signals the extent to which his own energetic fate is linked to that of the artworks.

Despite this experience of Roman ruin or ‘electric shock’, expatriate artists continually sought access to the energy of Roman things: the next section of this chapter will explore archaeological practices in mid-century Rome and how these figured in relation to notions of Roman energy. The practice of excavating Roman things was a paradoxical attempt to ‘care for’ and ‘admire [them] as heritage’, whilst simultaneously seeking to exploit their energy by incorporating it into new artworks: these paradoxical motivations arose from the pervasive anxiety regarding entropy that Rome instilled in its visitors. Whereas tourists such as Dorothea simply absorbed, or at least experienced, the energy in Rome, artists sought to access and harness it for their own work, and thus placed themselves in a conductive rather than receptive role. Expatriate artists conducting archaeological digs in Rome were doing so in order to extract value from Roman things: artistic energy. In doing so they assumed roles of not of caretakers, but of miners.

## **II. ‘A VERY WONDERFUL ARRANGEMENT OF PROVIDENCE’: EXCAVATING ROMAN ENERGY**

### **Excavation and the ‘Providential’ Mine**

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<sup>33</sup> Bjørnar Olsen and Þóra Pétursdóttir, ‘An archaeology of ruins’, in *Ruin Memories: Materiality, Aesthetics and the Archaeology of the Recent Past*, ed. by Bjørnar Olsen and Þóra Pétursdóttir (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 3-29 (p. 7).

‘I feel as if the Campagna were all steeped in human blood, and filled with human bones and dust,’ wrote Peabody Hawthorne. ‘I have heard that one cannot sit down on the grass in the Campagna [...] without finding, just beneath the flowers and turf, these human bones’ (281-2). The mass of Roman stuff that overwhelmed visitors above ground was denser still below the surface: Roman soil, and particularly that of the Campagna, was perceived as brimming with things. For Dickens the Campagna was ‘one field of ruin. Broken aqueducts, [...] broken temples; broken tombs. A desert of decay, sombre and desolate beyond all expression; and with a history in every stone that strews the ground’ (158). Later, Dickens writes that ‘every inch of ground, in every direction, is rich in associations’ (198). Just as Roman things above ground were containers of meaningful artistic energy, subterranean Rome was equally rich. In repeating and thus emphasising the word human in her description, Peabody Hawthorne instils history and meaning into the ‘dust’. Dickens juxtaposes the ‘sombre’ ‘desert’ above ground that in being ‘beyond all expression’ represents a kind of meaninglessness and lack of narrative, with the debris upon and within it: ‘a history’, and therefore a meaning and narrative, ‘within every stone’.

Descriptions of the Campagna focused on the contrasting ideas of the surface and the hidden subterranean world that lay ‘beneath the flowers and turf’. Just as Roman things were vessels in which energy was stored and from which it could be extracted, so too was the Campagna experienced as a place of storage. The landscape, Dickens found, was ‘sad’, ‘quiet’ and ‘sullen,’ because it was ‘so secret in its covering up of great masses of ruin, and hiding them’ (153). This apparently empty surface belied the resources that existed beneath the ground. Hawthorne, describing an excavation in the Campagna, notes that,

[a] short time ago the ground in the vicinity was a green surface, level, except here and there a little hillock, or scarcely perceptible swell [...]. Now the whole site of the basilica is uncovered, and they have dug into the depths of several tombs, bringing to light precious marbles, pillars, a statue, and elaborately wrought sarcophagi; and if they were to dig into almost every other inequality that frets the surface of the campagna, I suppose the result might be the same. (*Notebooks*, 201)

The focus here is on the various levels of the landscape: the ‘green surface’ and the ‘precious marbles’ that have surfaced from ‘the depths’ beneath. The image of the



surface, with its ‘scarcely perceptible swell’ and the ‘inequality that frets’ it is one of almost limitless potential, the ground bulging over the wealth it contains. For Story too the Campagna has an ‘undulating swell’ (*Roba*, 165); the surface is, to him ‘a murmurous roof’ that therefore suggests, even if it does not show directly, the fact that ‘[s]ubterranean Rome is vaster than the Rome above ground’ (*Roba*, 340; 342). At other times in *Roba di Roma*, the relationship between the terrain and the subterranean is given explicitly: ‘Under the swelling mounds, which rise everywhere around you in the Campagna, are the galleries and foundations of ancient villas and the chambers of ancient tombs’ (346).

Descriptions of the campagna, and Rome more broadly, as a site of energetic potential drew frequently on the image of a garden, in which plants, entwined with Roman ruins, presented an image of continuous and cyclical life. Of the Coliseum, Story writes that ‘[t]housands of beautiful flowers bloom in its ruined arches, tall plants and shrubs wave across the open spaces, and Nature has healed over the wounds of time with delicate grasses and weeds’ (*Roba*, 241). Dickens goes further by suggesting that, not only is the Coliseum still an energetic resource, but it is in fact more alive than ever before. He describes ‘young trees of yesterday, springing up on its ragged parapets, and bearing fruit: chance produce of the seeds dropped there by the birds who build their nests within its chinks and crannies’.

[T]o climb into its upper halls, and look down on ruin, ruin, ruin [...] is to see the ghost of old Rome, wicked, wonderful old city, haunting the very ground on which its people trod. [...] Never, in its bloodiest prime, can the sight of the gigantic Coliseum, full and running over with the lustiest life, have moved one’s heart, as it must move all who look upon it now[.] (*Pictures*, 168)

This is an image of a living building, almost personified by the descriptions of its ‘bloodiest prime’ and ‘lustiest life’, in which the cycle of growth and reproduction includes not only fruit-bearing trees and nesting birds but the ‘ghost of old Rome’. As an overgrown ruin, the Coliseum is more alive than ever.

This cycle repeats frequently in writing on Roman soil and the things it held. Story shows the *contadino* who ‘grows his beans’ in the ‘dust’ ‘of an Etruscan king’ (*Roba*, 314). Hawthorne imagines in his *Notebooks* his own ‘dust’ in place of Story’s king’s, weighing up the benefits of different forms of Roman burial: ‘I would rather have my ashes scattered over the soil to help the growth of the grass and daisies; but

still I should not murmur much at having them decently pigeon-holed in a Roman tomb' (120). Story describes the landscape of the Campagna at twilight, 'transfigured in a blaze of color—the earth seems fused in a fire of sunset—the ruins are of beaten gold—the meadows and hollows are crucibles where delicate rainbows melt into every tone and gradation of color—a hazy and misty splendour floats over the shadows, and earth drinks in the glory of the heavens' (*Roba*, 354). Here, energy stored in the 'crucible' of the campagna figures as light that not only reflects that of the sky but stores and bonds with it.

This imagery echoes not only from the pervasive ideas about energy, but also more specifically writing that applied similar theories to the context of soil and agriculture. Chemist James F. W. Johnston wrote in *Blackwood's* in 1853 about the process by which '[t]he same material [...] circulates over and over again [...]. It forms part of a vegetable to-day—it may be built into the body of a man to-morrow'. Even in an essay on the theory of chemical circulation, Johnston turned to a Roman example to support his argument: 'what is now part of the body of a Caesar or a Venus,' he wrote, 'may literally within a week become part of a turnip or of a potato'.<sup>34</sup>

When expatriates interacted with the circulation of energy in the Campagna with a view to gaining access to it, however, their imagery shifted from that of a garden towards that of a farm. In doing so they engaged not only with what Vance termed a 'pastoral and transcendent' site, but also with the energetic release that came from access to the Campagna's things. Hawthorne describes his son, Julian, 'gathering snail-shells' before moving on to 'verde antique, rosso antico, porphyry, giallo antico, serpentine, sometimes fragments of bas-reliefs and mouldings, bits of mosaic, still firmly stuck together, on which the foot of a Caesar had perhaps once trodden; pieces of Roman glass, with the iridescence glowing on them; and all such things, of which the soil of Rome is full'. Here Julian encounters Roman things as a kind of crop emerging from the 'soil of Rome': they are the 'spoils of his boyish rambles' (*Notebooks*, 138). Story repeatedly employs the metaphor of artifacts as a crop, drawn from the 'wonderfully fertile loam' of the campagna, which '[t]he accretions and decay of thousands of years have covered [...] with a loam whose

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<sup>34</sup> James F. W. Johnston, 'The Circulation of Matter', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 73 (May 1853), pp. 550-560 (556).

richness and depth are astonishing' (*Roba*, 167). When describing the landscape, he quotes from Francis Beaumont's poem 'On the Tombs in Westminster Abbey,' (1640): "Here are acres sown, indeed / With the richest royal'st seed / That the earth did e'er suck in", and in 'time [...] gone by in Italy,' he tells us, 'masterpieces of Titian and Raffaele, and gems and *intagli* of great value, were to be picked up for nothing', 'plenty as blackberries' (*Roba*, 341, 401). Since then, 'The soil has been almost over-worked by antiquarians and scholars, to whom the modern flower was nothing, but the antique brick a prize' (*Roba*, 6).

Agricultural metaphors in descriptions of the Campagna's—and Rome's—energetic potential, in which energy was extracted by the soil, were accompanied by similar metaphors of extraction that drew on the image of the mine. '[Y]ou have only to look at the configuration of the yet undisturbed ground beneath which the Via Latina runs,' wrote Weld, 'to feel persuaded that mines of archaeological treasure lie beneath your feet' (261-2). The Italian landscape was, in other parts of the country, a literal as well as metaphorical mine, as Dickens observed: he described the marble mines at Carrara, the product of which contributed to the central role the country played as a home to expatriate sculptors, in terms similar to those used to depict the Roman Campagna. Cinzia Sicca and Alison Yarrington characterize his depiction of the quarries as describing the 'essentially industrial base of sculptural production'.<sup>35</sup>

The quarries

are so many openings, high up in the hills [...] where they blast and excavate for marble: which may turn out good or bad: may make a man's fortune very quickly, or ruin him by the great expense of working what is nothing. Some of these caves were opened by the ancient Romans, and remain as they left them to this hour. Many others are being worked at this moment; others are to be begun to-morrow, next week, next month; others are unbought, unthought of; and marble enough for more ages than have passed since the place was resorted to, lies hidden everywhere, patiently awaiting its time of discovery. (*Pictures for Italy*, 140)

Dickens portrays the Carrara hills as sites of potential, much like the 'swelling' Campagna of Hawthorne and Story. By paradoxically thinking of the 'unthought of'

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<sup>35</sup> Cinzia Sicca and Alison Yarrington, 'Introduction', *The Lustrous Trade: Material History of Sculpture in England and Italy, c.1700-c.1860*, ed. by Cinzia Sicca and Alison Yarrington (London: Leicester University Press, 2000), pp. 1-26 (p. 11).

marble awaiting excavation in the future, and by drawing attention to the historical Roman practice of mining for marble, he indicates that the marble and the mines have their own kind of historical testimony. Like Roman artworks, the marble mined at Carrara contained value: in this case, financial, rather than energetic.

The extraction of Roman things from Roman soil is presented, in *Pictures from Italy*, as an equivalent practice to the extraction of Carrara marble from the Carrara hills. The Roman Catacombs, Dickens explains, were ‘quarries in the old time, but afterwards the hiding places of the Christians.’ They were ‘ghastly passages [that] have been explored for twenty miles; and form a chain of labyrinths, sixty miles in circumference’ (184). By noting their original role as pre-Christian quarries, Dickens evokes the Carrara quarries that were ‘opened by the ancient Romans’ in his description of the catacombs in their contemporary state as excavation sites; Roman excavation sites extract energetic rather than financial value.

The obvious parallels between mining and archaeology in terms of the practice of digging and extraction led to a shared view of both fossils (and fossil fuel reserves) and buried Roman things: in mid-century accounts of both, they were described as divine gifts to mankind. The term ‘fossil fuel’ was coined in 1759 by the German chemist Caspar Neumann,<sup>36</sup> and by the nineteenth century, MacDuffie notes, ‘discussions of the unsustainable path of fossil-fuel consumption almost inevitably included some kind of a consoling gesture towards the promise of new technologies and energy supplies’ (MacDuffie, 20). Weld’s writing juxtaposes Rome’s ‘undisturbed ground’ full of ‘archaeological treasures’ with ‘tertiary mosaic beds overlying volcanic tufa’ that ‘abound in fossil shells of the Pliocene period [...] the bones of the rhinoceros, hippopotamus, elephant, ox, lynx, &c.’ ‘To the geologist,’ he writes, Rome is ‘a rich storehouse’ (117). William Buckland’s *Geology and Minerology* (1836) described a system by which coal was ‘laid up in store’, with a ‘prospective view to the future uses of Man’ as part of a ‘design’.<sup>37</sup> Even in 1861, Robert Hunt argued that, ‘Coal was formed [...] with a design, and placed deep in the earth with a purpose [...] to promote the great effect of spreading over the world those

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<sup>36</sup> Caspar Neumann, *The Chemical Works of Caspar Neumann, M.D.*, Vol. 2, ed. by William Lewis (London: J. and F. Rivington, 1773), p. 492.

<sup>37</sup> William Buckland, *Geology and Minerology Considered with Reference to Natural Theology*, Vol. 1 (London: William Pickering, 1836), p. 538.

Divine principles which lead to “Peace on Earth.”’<sup>38</sup> ‘Statements like this,’ notes MacDuffie, ‘imagining the hand of God quietly planting coal beneath the ground for a sleeping nation to discover someday, were extraordinarily common throughout the nineteenth century’ (29).

So powerful was this image that it extended to the way Roman things were conceived: ‘It is a very wonderful arrangement of Providence,’ writes Hawthorne, that ‘precious relic[s] of the past’

should have been preserved for a long series of coming generations by that accumulation of dust and soil and grass and trees and houses over them, which will keep them safe, and cause their reappearance above ground to be gradual, so that the rest of the world's lifetime may have for one of its enjoyments the uncovering of old Rome. (*Notebooks*, 201)

Hawthorne’s conception of an arrangement of Providence’ echoes the ‘design’ imagined by those writing on coal supplies: the resource of Roman things was established with the goal of offering ‘enjoyment’ to ‘the world’. Just as the writing on coal as a divine gift, ‘represented a perfect harmonization of the divine plan with the historical forces of industrialism,’ Hawthorne’s equivalent formulation suggests that the archaeological practices of those excavating Roman things were not only part of an intelligent plan, but necessary for the happiness of ‘the rest of the world’ (MacDuffie, 30; Hawthorne, 201). This is echoed by Weld, who describes the process as uniquely Roman and as ‘one of the many characteristic features of Rome’ the fact that ‘while time gradually decays and entombs numerous ancient relics of the past, a kind of compensating process is simultaneously going on’: ‘in some localities the dust of twenty centuries [...] has been cleared away, and we stand face to face with the works of those who lived and moved when the city of the Caesars was the talk and wonder of the world’ (95).

As Margarita Diaz-Andreu describes, the nineteenth century was a turning-point for the practice of archaeology: ‘The contrast between the early and the mid years of the nineteenth century in terms of the interest towards the past is striking: the sheer numbers of people, associations, and museums that have cropped up in these

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<sup>38</sup> Robert Hunt, quoted in MacDuffie, p. 29.

pages is staggering in comparative terms.’<sup>39</sup> By the mid century, Philippa Levine states, archaeology had become a mainstream and fashionable pursuit.<sup>40</sup> The ‘Istituto di Corrispondenza Archaeologica’ (Corresponding Society for Archaeology) was established in Rome in 1829 and had ‘an international character’ throughout the century. Its stated goal was to ‘make known all archaeologically significant facts and finds [...] that are brought to light in the realm of classical antiquity, in order that these may be saved from being lost, and by means of concentration in one place may be made accessible for scientific study’ (Diaz-Andreu, 101-2). Rome was the site of many high-profile excavations, and notably the discovery by Giovanni Battista de Rossi between 1849 and 1854 of the Catacombs of St. Callixtus,<sup>41</sup> considered ‘the centre and most important part of the vast subterranean city’ by contemporary antiquarians.<sup>42</sup>

However, just as arguments regarding the ‘providential’ supply of coal were countered by those decrying the depletion of energy resources, so too were ideas of Rome’s providential supply of artefacts. MacDuffie notes that ‘beginning in the 1840s, and increasing in urgency in the 1850s and 1860s,’ industrial mining ‘stirred widespread concerns about the unsustainable dynamic of industrial development and resource use. Indeed, the size of such consumption seemed, in the minds of some commentators, to augur the eventual failure of everything from coal supplies to farmlands to the sun itself’ (48). In the Italian artistic context, a surge in the frequency and intensity of archaeological digs during the nineteenth century led to increased regulation of the artefacts they produced. The relationship between excavation and entropic destruction was palpable: Weld describes the disinterment of ‘a few bones, which crumbled to dust on exposure to the air’ (101).

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<sup>39</sup> Margarita Diaz-Andreu Garcia, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology: Nationalism, Colonialism and the Past* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 364. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>40</sup> Philippa Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional: Antiquarians, Historians and Archaeologists in Victorian England, 1838-1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 2.

<sup>41</sup> Wendy J. Reardon, *The Deaths of the Popes: Comprehensive Accounts, Including Funerals, Burials and Epitaphs* (Jefferson: McFarland & Co, 2010), p. 10.

<sup>42</sup> Rev. J. Spencer Northcote and Rev. W. R. Brownlow, *Roma Sotteranea, or Some Account of the Roman Catacombs, especially of the Cemetery of San Callisto, compiled from the works of Commendatore De Rossi with the consent of the author* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader and Dyer, 1869), p. 120.

Furthermore, Weld notes, the exporting of Roman artefacts by tourists and archaeologists led to significant depletion of the Roman resource:

The time was when there was no need to go without the walls of Rome to find rich and rare marbles. [...] But prodigious as were the quantities of marbles in Rome they could not last long when railways brought thousands of visitors annually to the city, and now it is very rare to find even a small piece of marble within the walls. (163)

These anxieties built on an earlier established fear regarding the depletion of Roman resources: in 1756, Issac Ware noted that ‘marble becomes a curiosity because it is very scarce [...] or because the quarry is exhausted.’<sup>43</sup> In 1865, however, Weld insists that ‘[t]he quarry’ of Rome was ‘still far from exhausted’; legislation introduced over the course of the century sought to protect it (Weld, 164). In 1820 the Pacca Edict ‘prohibited the export of art and antiquities without the approval of the papal government’.<sup>44</sup> Diaz-Andreu notes that, subsequently, ‘experts had to content themselves with studying the archaeology in situ owing to the ban on any antiquities leaving the country’ (103). Norman Vance writes that the ‘fiercely protective attitude towards classical antiquities on the part of successive Italian governments helped to preserve much of what was left on site,’ and ended the period in which Italy had been ‘a happy hunting-ground for rapacious collectors of antiquities.’<sup>45</sup>

The regulatory measures around excavation that expatriates and visitors encountered in Rome were suggestive of a parallel to the ongoing debate amongst scientists and writers regarding the use, depletion and conservation of fossil fuels. Like other writers, William Stanley Jevons described coal as ‘the material wealth which Providence has placed at our disposal,’ but *The Coal Question* (1865) was preoccupied with ‘the earnest and wise application of it’ in the face of its evident and

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<sup>43</sup> Isaac Ware, *A Complete Body of Architecture* (London: T. Osborne and J. Shipton, 1756), p. 53.

<sup>44</sup> Hima Mallampati Gleason, ‘Collecting in Colonial America and “Cast Culture”’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture*, ed. by Elise A. Friedland and Melanie Grunow Sobocinski, with Elaine K. Gazda (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 44-58 (p. 52).

<sup>45</sup> Norman Vance, *The Victorians and Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 21. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text as ‘N. Vance’.

ongoing depletion (xlix). The book ‘established his public reputation as an economist after it was cited in Parliament in 1866 by both John Stuart Mill’, and ‘brought Jevons more fame than he had ever dreamed of’.<sup>47</sup> The book began to have far-reaching influence: ‘Gladstone purportedly revised his 1866 budget in response’ (Schabas, 133). Jevons’ suggested that the British, in their consumption of international coal, were ‘like settlers spreading in a rich new country of which the boundaries are yet unknown and unfelt’ (200). This simile can also be applied to the mode by which the British had collected antiquities up until that century, most notably in the case of Lord Elgin and the Parthenon marbles, ‘an example,’ in Nadine Gordimer’s words, ‘of imperial arrogance manifest in marble’.<sup>48</sup> In Rome, ‘the boundaries’ of this consumption were finally being felt in the form of government regulation of antiquities, which served to highlight, in terms of excavations at least, Jevons’ argument regarding the need for conservation.

Expatriates visiting Rome in order to access its artistic energy faced a paradoxical challenge: they wanted to harness that energy without accelerating its depletion. ‘The practice of archaeology,’ writes Tim Ingold, ‘is itself a form of dwelling. The knowledge born of this practice is thus on a par with what comes from the practical activity of the native dweller. [...] For both the archaeologist and the native dweller, the landscape tells – or rather *is* a story.’<sup>49</sup> Expatriate artists thus attempted to position themselves not as ‘rapacious collectors’ invested in the financial value of the art object, but as dweller-artists interested in the artistic energy that was at once contained within—but separate from—the thing, and which could be accessed and channeled creatively into new artworks. In formulating archaeology as a creative practice, expatriate artists were leaning on terms employed in domestic Italian political debate that took place in the first half of the century, as Caroline Springer notes: ‘If Byron reads the ruins of Italy as a sign of absence, both the Church and its

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<sup>47</sup> Bert Mosselmans, *William Stanley Jevons and the Cutting Edge of Economics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 14; Margaret Schabas, ‘The “Worldly Philosophy” of William Stanley Jevons’ *Victorian Studies* 28.1 (1984), pp. 129-47 (p. 133). Further references to these edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>48</sup> Nadine Gordimer, ‘Preface’, in Christopher Hitchens, *The Parthenon Marbles: The Case for Reunification* (London: Verso, 2008), pp. vii-x (p. vii).

<sup>49</sup> Tim Ingold, ‘The Temporality of the Landscape’, in *Conceptions of Time and Ancient Society/World Archaeology*, ed. by R. Bradley (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), pp.152-174 (p. 152).



democratic opposition celebrated antiquity as a palpable presence, daily restored through the agency of archaeology' (3).

Horace Walpole, who Norman Vance proposes as a quintessential 'rapacious collector', wrote, of his 1740 visit to Rome that he was 'far gone in medals, lamps, idols, prints, &c., and all the small commodities to the purchase of which I can attain. I would buy the Colosseum, if I could' (Norman Vance, 21).<sup>50</sup> McCue identifies the 'insatiable desire to possess Italian renaissance art' as widespread amongst English travellers in the Romantic period; 'collection had become so widespread that many people believed that Britain [...] [was] best equipped to preserve Italy's artistic heritage' (42;40). This attitude contrasts with that expressed in the mid-nineteenth century by artists such as Story, who were unable to 'possess' as Walpole had been, many of the artefacts of Rome, and who instead sought to explore, for example, how '[p]ersons are differently affected by the Colosseum' (*Roba*, 219). In exploring the affect of Roman things, Story indicated his interest in a different kind of access to them, which engaged with and harnessed energy of the thing without needing to own the object.

This attitude informed a depiction of new, as well as antique, art objects as fossils. In *The Marble Faun*, Hawthorne uses the term to describe newly-made statues. Kenyon's *Cleopatra* is an art object that contains powerful energy, 'fervid to the touch with fiery life, the fossil woman of an age that produced statelier, stronger, and more passionate creatures than our own. You already felt her compressed heat' (293). The *Cleopatra's* 'compressed heat' and 'fiery life' support the image of the new statue as a fossil fuel that, like coal, is an energetic resource. Kenyon's description of her creation is, likewise, drawn from the metaphors of fuel and burning: 'I kindled a great fire in my mind and threw in the material [...] and in the midmost heat uprose Cleopatra as you see her' (99). Later, the term recurs in a description of Kenyon's bust of Donatello, and is rejected: 'In the midst appeared the features, lacking sharpness, and very much resembling a fossil countenance,—but we have already used this simile, in reference to Cleopatra, with the accumulations of long-past ages clinging to it' (295). Jonathan Auerbach relates Hawthorne's use of the term to his

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<sup>50</sup> Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of Horace Walpole and his contemporaries*, Vol. 1, ed. by Eliot Warburton (London: Colburn and Co., 1852), p. 281.

attempts to differentiate between artforms—‘the illusiveness of painting and the rigidity of sculpture’—but identifies that ‘[t]he simile of a “fossil,” in fact, is itself a source of unease for Hawthorne’.<sup>51</sup> This ‘unease’ relates not to Hawthorne’s fear that his own works could be transformed into the ‘dead realm of petrified fact’, as Auerbach suggests, but rather to the extent that new artworks were able to act as energetic storage in the way that old ones did. Miriam argues that the art of painting, which represents ‘brief snatches of time’ has more ‘scope and freedom’ than the ‘fossilizing process’ of sculpture, which Kenyon argues should represent a ‘moral standstill, since there must of necessity be a physical one’. In fact, both ‘old’ paintings and sculptures in the novel are represented as successfully storing energy, such as the *Faun of Praxitiles*, which is ‘twenty-five centuries old, and [...] still looks as young as ever’, and the ‘energetic demon’ portrayed in a Guido sketch (14; 108). Patricia Pulham reads the change of the title of Hawthorne’s novel from *Transformation* to *The Marble Faun* as indicative of ‘a tension’: ‘Transformation’ suggests slippage, change, and ambiguity, which the ‘marble’ body of the faun focuses the mind on stasis, ossification, and fossilization’ (85). The narrative’s uncertainty about the possibilities and the terms of the creation of ‘new’ fossils is a reflection not of the differences between artistic forms, but of Hawthorne’s anxiety regarding the role of the expatriates’ art in the cycling of Roman energy.

Again, these ideas ran parallel to ongoing debates within the scientific community regarding energy, participating in the ‘one culture’ identified by George Levine and discussed in the introduction, in which different ‘modes of discourse’ in the arts and sciences shared ‘common cultural sources’ and explored ideas in parallel, tandem, or collaboration (4). MacDuffie describes a ‘growing conflict’ in the mid- to late nineteenth century ‘between two different understandings of energy. The first is energy as a pervasive, indestructible agency that moves freely between industry and nature. The second is energy understood as a resource, limited in quantity, subject to irreversible dissipation, and potentially toxic in its after-effects’ (32). Expatriate visitors to Rome were invested in the first concept of energy—‘pervasive,

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<sup>51</sup> Jonathan Auerbach, ‘Executing the Model: Painting, Sculpture, and Romance-Writing in Hawthorne’s *The Marble Faun*’, *ELH*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (Spring, 1980), pp. 103-120 (p. 109). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

indestructible’—which they perceived to be contained within artworks, but were simultaneously anxious about the consequences of engaging with the second.

Ruskin explores this conflict—between notions of energy as a limited resource and as an enduring constant—in relation to art in *Munera Pulveris* (1863) in his discussion of the idea of ‘value’: ‘Value signifies the strength or “availing” of anything towards the sustaining of life, and is always twofold; that is to say, primarily, INTRINSIC, and, secondarily, EFFECTUAL.’<sup>52</sup> This, he explains, exists independently of demand for purchase or the original amount of labour that went into the work. Summarising this argument in 1888, F. J. Stimson describes Ruskin’s comparison between an ‘obscene’ French lithograph and the paintings of Tintoret in Venice:

The labor employed on the stone for the lithography was very much more than Tintoret gave to his picture: if labor be the origin of value, therefore, the stone is the more valuable article of the two. And since, also, it is capable of producing a large number of immediately salable or exchangeable impressions, for which the “demand” is constant, the city of Paris is, under all hitherto stated principles of political economy, richer in possession of the lithographic stone than Venice with the picture. But no. Wealth consists in an intrinsic value developed by a vital power; and the study of wealth is a province of natural science,—it deals with the essential properties of things.<sup>53</sup>

While demand for the French lithograph is high, and the labour that went into its production greater, its value is financial and therefore aligned with an idea of energy as a resource that is depletable and ‘limited in quantity’; (the consequences of mass production and print culture for notions of artistic value that this passage raises will be discussed in the following chapter.) Ruskin argues that the Tintorets, conversely, have ‘a vital power’ that gives them ‘the intrinsic and eternal nature of wealth; and Venice, still possessing ruins of them, was a rich city’ (*Munera Pulveris*, xiii). As Ruskin did in Venice, expatriate visitors to Rome sought to engage with the ‘vital

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<sup>52</sup> John Ruskin, *Munera Pulveris: Six Essays on the Elements of Political Economy* (London: George Allen, Sunnyside and Orpington, 1894), p. 11. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>53</sup> F. J. Stimson, ‘Ruskin as a Political Economist’, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 2, No. 4 (1888), pp. 414–45 (p. 418).

power' of the artwork, rather than its 'exchange-value' (*Munera Pulveris*, xii): this is the 'pervasive, indestructible' energy 'that moves freely between industry and nature'.

Story's description of the conditions of discovery and ownership of the Porta Portese Venus leans on a similar distinction between the artistic and exchange values of an art object. The proprietor of the vineyard where the statue was found 'had never thought it *worth while* to excavate it' [my emphasis] because '*che costa denaro*'. When 'an acquaintance had proposed to pay a certain proportion of the cost' of a new cellar he required, 'provided he should have as his own everything of value that might be found in the excavations' the proprietor thought, 'A bird in the hand [...] is worth two in the bush, so he gladly accepted' (*Roba*, 322). Upon the discovery of the Venus, the proprietor 'seemed to have a very undeveloped knowledge or taste in sculpture, and apparently was not aware of the great value of the statue [...] [t]hough it was evident to him that he had lost by his bargain [...] at all events, for a week his *osteria* had been thronged with visitors, and he had made his profits out of the wine he had sold' (*Roba*, 323). Throughout this passage, Story plays with the shifting meanings of the terms 'value', 'worth,' 'profit' and 'cost'. The proprietor is both keenly aware of the financial value of the statue and its equivalent in terms of wine sales or the cost of cellar installation, and 'not aware of the great value of the statue' in Ruskin's sense of 'the sustaining of life'. In highlighting this distinction, Story signals his own sophisticated understanding of artistic value, and indicates that his role as an expatriate artist is to engage with the energy of the art object, and furthermore, to preserve it by transferring it creatively into his own written account of the excavation in *Roba di Roma*.

While collectors and enthusiasts had once taken with them the Roman things they found, by the mid century, expatriate artists were forced to consider alternative means of harnessing or taking possession of these archaeological finds. Artists engaged with the artistic energy contained within Roman things, and replaced the notion of 'possession' with one of harnessing that energy and instilling it into new creative work, often in the form of ekphrastic writing about the thing itself. Ruskin describes the constant energy of the world as a system of balance: 'The world is not to be cheated of a grain; not so much of a breath of its air can be drawn surreptitiously. For every piece of wise work done, so much life is granted' (*Munera Pulveris*, 9). Thus artists who performed 'wise work' could contribute to the overall balancing of global energy; making art was a method by which artists could participate in the

constant cycle of energy without depleting it. The excavation of the Porta Portese *Venus* and the subsequent literary descriptions of that excavation thus conform to the pattern of mid-nineteenth-century artistic engagement with Roman things: the next section discusses the ways in which artists worked to access and harness the energy of excavated things and use them in their own work.

### III. EXCAVATING THE MODEL: MAKING NEW ART FROM OLD THINGS

#### Sexual desire and harnessing artistic energy

‘[S]trangely vital things [...] will rise up to meet us in this chapter,’ writes Jane Bennett, as she presents a series of things for analysis in *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (3). When writers describe the process by which objects become things, it is frequently presented as a kind of surfacing, in which the object rises up into thingness. Foucault, in *The Order of Things* (1970) discussing Kant’s transcendental idealism, describes the process by which the gap is closed between ‘being’ and ‘representation’ as a ‘ris[ing] up’ from ‘that never objectifiable depth [...] towards our superficial knowledge’.<sup>54</sup> The relationship between ‘being’ and ‘representation’ runs parallel to that between the object and the thing, as W. J. T. Mitchell describes: ‘[O]bjects are the way things appear to a subject—that is, with a name, an identity, a gestalt or stereotypical template [...]. Things, on the other hand, [...] [signal] the moment when the object becomes the Other’ (156-7). Like Bennett’s things, then, Foucault’s are rising from ‘depth’ to the ‘superficial’, and in both formulations, the beholder, writer, visitor, or archaeologist, is responsible for releasing the full potential of the thing by bringing it ‘to light’. Foucault’s project in *The Order of Things* is an archaeological one—‘not so much a history, in the traditional meaning of that word, as an “archaeology”’—in which he sets out to ‘bring to light’ his subject (xxiv).

This model was a particularly potent one for the expatriate artists and writers in Rome in the mid century, for whom the literal act of archaeological excavation was

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<sup>54</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 266. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

central to their creative practice. The process by which Roman things were ‘brought to light’ was the same one that enabled expatriate artists to participate in the cycle of Roman energy and thus ‘bring to light’ their own work. In an article entitled ‘Executing the Model’, Jonathan Auerbach describes Hawthorne’s project in *The Marble Faun* as an attempt to identify ‘the source of [the] intrinsic “beauty and glory” which is common to all art, including writing’ and finds that ‘Hawthorne tentatively affirms that “the spirit and essence” of art has a conceptual basis: ideas animate the imagination, which in turn engenders art’ (108). Auerbach here in fact describes that cycle of artistic energy with which expatriate artists came to Rome to engage: the ‘spirit and essence’ of art was energetic. In Dickens’ words, his ‘faint reflections’ of Italy in *Pictures from Italy* were ‘penned in the fullness of the subject, and with the liveliest impressions of novelty and freshness’ because they were ‘written on the spot’ (10). He had captured artistic energy and harnessed it within his own narrative in a way that could in turn be accessed by the reader of his text.

The final section of this chapter applies psychoanalytical readings of archaeological practice to Henry James’ story of erotic excavation, *The Last of the Valerii* (1874), Story and Hawthorne’s accounts of the excavation of the Porta Portese Venus, and *The Marble Faun*’s treatment of the emergence of the Model from the catacombs. These narratives describe the accessing and harnessing of the artistic energy of excavated things via the imposition of erotic desire and memory onto the art object. The idea of ‘bringing things to light’ inherent in the archaeological practice of digging up the past, and its psychological parallels of uncovering desire and memory from the subconscious, is fundamental to a conception of excavating Roman things as a creative rather than an exhaustive process. By transforming the experience and subsequent accounts of excavation into their own new art, expatriate artists sought to escape anxieties about industrial production—the eventual entropic emptiness of the industrial coalmine—and the parallel entropy they feared in terms of artistic production and access.

This section thus considers the role archaeology and excavated Roman things played in creative practice. When James describes ‘these things—so many of them as there are—surviving their long earthly obscurity in this perfect shape, and coming up like long-lost divers from the sea of time’, his personification of excavated things as ‘divers’ serves to highlight the profundity of the encounter between the artist and the thing: the thing figures as a messenger, a conveyor of energy, and it is with this

energy that the artist can go on to fulfil his or her purpose and create art (*Transatlantic Sketches*, 195).

In 1854, Anna Jameson updated Coleridge's assertion that, 'art itself might be defined as of a middle quality between a thought and a thing',<sup>55</sup> with the argument that, 'Sculpture is a *thought* and a *thing*' [original emphasis].<sup>56</sup> Roman things, however, are *thoughts* and *things* and *also* the *middle quality between* them: they are the mediating 'divers' of Dickens' metaphor as well as the things and meanings the divers bring to light. Hannah Arendt, exploring Benjamin's writing on memory and the past, described his work as that of a 'pearl diver who descends to the bottom of the sea [...] to pry loose the rich and strange, the pearls and corals in the depths, and to carry them to the surface'. This approach 'delves into the depths of the past' with the belief that 'decay is at the same time a process of crystallization, that in the depth of the sea [...] what was once alive' will be brought 'up into the world of the living – as "thought fragments"'.<sup>57</sup> Arendt here identifies a creative relationship to the past in which decay itself is formulated as a creative starting point. This was understood and experienced by expatriate artists in Rome for whom anxiety regarding entropy was a creative stimulus, but it was also embodied *within* the Roman things they sought.

Paul Akers' sculpture *The Dead Pearl Diver* (1858) is a depiction of the risks of the work of the artist in Rome, and of the position of the Roman thing between creation and decay:

It represents the pearl-fisher lying upon the rock over which he has slipped, and from exhaustion has not power to recover himself, dying with the rare and beautiful shell in his hand, for which he has risked his life. [...] About him, upon the sand, and clinging to the rocks, are various crustacea, and at his feet, by which he has evidently been held down, is a sprig of coral.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'On Poesy or Art', in *The Theory of Criticism: From Plato to the Present: A Reader*, ed. by Raman Selden (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 24-28 (p. 24).

<sup>56</sup> Anna Jameson, *A Handbook to the Courts of Modern Sculpture* (London: Crystal Palace Library and Bradbury & Evans, 1854), p. 4. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>57</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, ed. by Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 31.

<sup>58</sup> 'Art Gossip.' *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* 3, no. 5 (1859), pp. 233-35 (p. 234).



1. Paul Akers, *The Dead Pearl Diver*, 1858

The diver, who ‘has not power to recover himself’, is caught up in, and weighed down by, Roman things. Hawthorne places the statue in Kenyon’s studio in *The Marble Faun*,<sup>59</sup> where Miriam observes that, ‘[t]he poor young man has perished among the prizes that he sought [...] But what a strange efficacy there is in death! If we cannot all win pearls, it causes an empty shell to satisfy us just as well’ (192). This is equally a description of the work of the expatriate artists in Rome whose project was to delve into the past, risking a dangerous encounter with the power of Roman things that constantly ‘threatened to overwhelm’ them. The ‘empty shell’ of the entropic Roman thing is mirrored by the body of the dead artist, which represents the thing itself. John Carlos Rowe writes that *The Dead Pearl Diver*’s ‘dynamism combines the death throe and sexual desire, the troubling conjunction of thanatos and eros.’<sup>60</sup> It is the ‘troubling conjunction’, the tension between energy and entropy, in Roman things, that drew expatriate artists to them.

Jennifer Wallace finds that archaeology as a practice is a creative one: ‘[D]ead mundane matter—a corpse, a wall—is momentarily transfigured by the imagination

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<sup>59</sup> In his preface, Hawthorne notes that, ‘the Author laid felonious hands upon a certain bust of Milton and a statue of a Pearl-Diver, which he found in the studio of Mr. PAUL AKERS, and secretly conveyed them to the premises of his imaginary friend’ (*Marble Faun*, 5).

<sup>60</sup> John Carlos Rowe, ‘Hawthorne’s Ghost’, p. 87.



into something more significant, a story from the past',<sup>61</sup> just as James' excavated things are transfigured into 'long-lost divers'. This sense of archaeology as a moral, creative and intellectual practice had already emerged by the mid-nineteenth century. The 1857 *Archaeological Journal* included an article by Reverend John Collingwood Bruce, who argued that:

archaeology is not simply valuable as a purveyor of facts and evidences for the use of the historian. It elevates the mind of man; [...] it lifts us out of the rut of our every-day life; it makes our hearts beat in sympathy with those who cannot repay us even the 'tribute of a sigh;' it educes affections [...] which are apt to be dried up by too long and too intimate an acquaintance with the market-place and the exchange.<sup>62</sup>

For Bruce, the practice of digging down leads to the 'elevation' of the mind. Exploration of the 'rut' of the earth simultaneously lifts the archaeologist out of the 'rut of our everyday life'. By engaging with things, which have, in Ruskin's formulation, 'intrinsic' and 'effectual' value rather than exchange value in 'the market-place', the archaeologist is morally elevated. Just as Story's Mallett finds that works by 'Titian, Tintoret, or Vandyck' make 'unconscious impressions [...] which sink into the soul, and alter life', so does exposure to excavated things have an elevating effect (*Conversations*, 9). Moreover, and perhaps counter-intuitively, in Bruce's description the archaeologists' task is portrayed not only as a moral but as a sexual pursuit: their 'hearts beat' for the excavated thing; 'affections' are restored that had been 'dried up' by commercial concerns.

In accounts of Roman excavations, the experience of the archaeologist or witness of excavation was frequently expressed in sexual terms. Henry James, in *The Last of the Valerii*, explores the sexualisation of the excavation of Roman things in a story, that, like *The Marble Faun*, introduces an excavated object into the lives of expatriates in Rome. While P. R. Grover and Patricia Merivale have explored the

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<sup>61</sup> Jennifer Wallace, *Digging the Dirt: The Archaeological Imagination* (London: Duckworth, 2004), p. 11. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text as 'J. Wallace'.

<sup>62</sup> John Collingwood Bruce, 'The Practical Advantages Accruing from the Study of Archaeology,' in *The Archaeological Journal* (London: 1857), p. 7.

relationship between James' story and Mérimée's 'La Vénus D'Ille' (1837),<sup>63</sup> many others have demonstrated its rigorous engagement with *The Marble Faun*, a novel intensely concerned with the energetic consequences of excavation in Rome.<sup>64</sup> In James' story, Martha, the young American wife of an Italian count, initiates excavations of her husband's Roman villa that result in the discovery of a 'wonderful Juno'.<sup>65</sup> When confronted with the uncovered statue, the narrator has an intense, physical and erotic reaction: 'My pulses began to throb' (22). The Count announces that he had been dreaming of the Juno, 'and that she rose and came and laid her marble hand on mine,' at which the superintendent presents the hand of the Juno and replies, 'I have had it safe here this half-hour, so it can't have touched you!' (24). In this exchange, James highlights the thingness of the Juno, and relates this to the statue's erotic power. The excessive force of the statue is such that it in fact *can* extend beyond the object of the marble hand, which is figured as storage, and touch the sleeping Count. This forceful touch is experienced as intimate and sensual.<sup>66</sup>

The process by which the Juno is restored is also viewed and described by the artist-narrator in sexual terms: 'The small superintendent [...] rubbed her and scraped her with mysterious art, removed her earthy stains, gave her back the lustre of beauty. Her firm, fine surface seemed to glow with a kind of renascent purity and bloom' (26). While the image of the excavator 'rubbing' the figure is in itself a sexual one, the

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<sup>63</sup> See P. R. Grover, 'Mérimée's Influence on Henry James,' *The Modern Language Review* 63, no. 4 (1968), pp. 810-17 (p. 811); Patricia Merivale, 'The Raven and the Bust of Pallas: Classical Artifacts and the Gothic Tale,' *PMLA* 89, no. 5 (1974), pp. 960-66 (pp. 961-962). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>64</sup> See Sanford E. Marovitz, 'Roderick Hudson: James's Marble Faun,' *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 11, no. 4 (1970): 1427-1443, p. 1442; John Carlos Rowe, 'Hawthorne's Ghost', p. 91.

<sup>65</sup> Henry James, 'The Last of the Valerii', *Daisy Miller and Other Stories* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), pp. 13-42 (p. 24). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>66</sup> John Carlos Rowe notes that the *Juno's* hand 'recalls the sculpture of Hilda's hand that Kenyon shows Miriam' in *The Marble Faun*, which in turn is based on Harriet's Hosmer's *Clasped Hands* of the Brownings. (See 'Hawthorne's Ghost' p. 104.) However, the image of the energetic dream-hand is later replaced by the single detached marble hand kept as a 'relic', and which indicates the lack of artistic communicative power between the Count and the *Juno*. Unlike the communicative touch between two artists portrayed in Hosmer's sculpture, discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis, James represents an energetic dead end: the non-artist in Rome is incapable of channelling Roman energy.

overall process is portrayed as one by which the statue is purified, and which, ultimately, restores her to a virginal state of untouched sexual potential: the ‘earthy stains’ are gone, replaced by ‘renascent purity’. So complete is the sexual resurrection of the Juno that she becomes the legitimate competitor to Martha for the Count’s affections: ‘Your enemy is the Juno,’ her godfather tells her. ‘[T]he Count takes her *au sérieux*’ (38).

When Story and Hawthorne encounter the *Porta Portese Venus*, they too experience the erotic force of the excavated statue. The encounter is reported by both writers as one in which a naked female body is exposed for their interest and pleasure. The statue had already been disinterred prior to their visit, however, both writers linger over the idea of the statue as newly uncovered, or in the process of being uncovered. Story reports the actual moment of discovery after conversation with the proprietor, placing the Venus with the other Roman things in *Roba di Roma* that force themselves upon the discoverer:

Scarcely had the first blow been struck with the pick, when the foundations of an ancient villa were disclosed [...] and there in the centre lay the Venus we were looking at, fallen and covered with rubbish and loose dirt. (322)

This discovery is framed almost identically to that of Story’s Signor Fortunati, (‘Scarcely had he struck pick and spade into the earth, when he burst through the roof of two ancient tombs’ (318)). Hawthorne’s ‘discovery’ moment is more intimate and observed first hand. His introduces the figure ‘covered with a coarse cloth, or a canvas bag’, before describing its removal (*Notebooks*, 516). The significance of this uncovering becomes apparent by the erotic tenor of the following description, which dwells in titillating detail on the exposed nudity of the statue. Hawthorne’s narration offers an intimate inventory of the Venus’ body and anatomy:

Both arms were broken off, but the greater part of both, and nearly the whole of one hand, had been found, and these being adjusted to the figure, they took the well-known position before the bosom and the middle, as if the fragmentary woman retained her instinct of modesty to the last. There were the marks on the bosom and thigh where the fingers had touched[.] (*Notebooks*, 516-7)

Not only does Hawthorne sexualise the body parts that initially draw his attention—the bosom, thigh and fingers—by the very fact of highlighting them together, but he imposes on the statue a sexual consciousness with an ‘instinct of modesty’. The suggestion of a nude woman, rather than a piece of stone, formulates the encounter as a sexual one between a naked woman and on-looking men, rather than intellectual discovery. This scenario reaches an erotic peak in an interaction between Story and the statue: ‘The earth still clung about her; her beautiful lips were full of it, till Mr. Story took a thin chip of wood and cleared it away from between them’ (*Notebooks*, 517). Story, here, appears to remove a final obstruction to full sexual access to the statue and her ‘beautiful lips’. Story’s account, too, foregrounds the statue as a primarily sexual object following its uncovering. In *Roba di Roma*, the Venus is, ‘risen, not from the sea but from the earth, somewhat grimed by the dirt in which she had made her bed for centuries’. He offers the charged image of the naked woman rising from her bed, before moving on to consider the ‘legs and extremities’ and a torso ‘peculiarly elegant in its contour’ (*Roba*, 320).

‘Excavation’, writes archaeologist Michael Shanks, ‘is striptease. The layers are peeled off slowly; eyes of intent scrutiny. The pleasure is in seeing more, but it lies in the edges: the edge of stocking-top and thigh.’<sup>67</sup> Jennifer Wallace, in her own exploration of the ‘seductions of the soil’ criticises Shanks’ work for ‘consciously defend[ing] the notion of “excavation as striptease”’ and for its ‘aggressive masculinity’ and ‘emphasis on the phallic spade and the phallic eye’. ‘The erotic associations involved in stripping away the soil,’ she writes, ‘seem to be never far from the male archaeologist’s thoughts’ (J. Wallace, 80-81). These ‘erotic associations’ were in fact central to the experience of witnessing excavations as modes of energetic release. The sexual desire expressed by Story, Hawthorne and the narrator of *The Last of the Valerii* is a desire to possess the power of the excavated thing. In a discussion of power dynamics within the nineteenth-century practice of mesmerism, Steven Connor identifies a relationship between subjects that ‘among S&M enthusiasts is known as “topping from below”, that is, the exercise of power in and through the apparent posture of submission. Mesmerism did not just offer to its

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<sup>67</sup> Michael Shanks, *Experiencing the Past: On the Character of Archaeology* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002), p. 68.

operators the power of enthralling, but also held out the power of being able to succumb to power – the passipotent power of sensitivity, susceptibility.’<sup>68</sup> While the power dynamics of mesmerism in relation to the creation of art during this period in Rome will be discussed in the following chapters, this dynamic also operates between the excavator and the excavated thing. The male artist’s desire to possess the feminised art object figures as a mode of harnessing the thing’s energy for the artist’s own creative work, and thus allowing himself to channel that energy into new work. The sexual dynamics of this exchange are not exclusively heterosexual, as Robert K. Martin demonstrates: Hawthorne experiences a similarly erotic reaction to Praxiteles’ *Faun*, ‘justifying his obsession with the idea of “writing a little Romance” about it’; Hawthorne’s notes on the statue are ‘a celebration of the male body’ in which ‘the ears and tail [...] as displaced genitals’ are ‘particularly fetishized’ (34). For beholders of Roman energy who were not intending to ‘writ[e] a little Romance’, and who were thus not able to mediate that energy, the experience of the thing’s erotic power became more intense. This James explores in *The Last of the Valerii*: ‘the freeing of pagan sexual energy, represented by the statue goddess,’ writes Robert Emmett Long, ““possesses” Camillo’s body and mind in a form of psychic enslavement.’<sup>69</sup>

This ‘possession’ is derived from the Count’s inability to channel the artistic energy of the statue. Thus, for Patricia Merivale, *The Last of the Valerii* is a story in which ‘an ordinary human being narrowly escapes the dangerous vision of ideal beauty which would have created, and then destroyed, a true artist’ (961). Furthermore, the Count not only lacks artistic ambitions of his own, but denies others the opportunity to access the Juno to create their own art. When an archaeologist requests to view the statue, the Count denies its existence and sends him away, objecting that, ‘[h]e was going to make some hideous drawing of her’. The implication is that this would be a kind of loss; the Count cannot tolerate any of the statue’s energy being accessed by anyone else. The artist-narrator is similarly forbidden from drawing

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<sup>68</sup> Steven Connor, ‘All I Believed is True: Dickens under the Influence’, 19: *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 2010(10), p. 16. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<<http://www.19.bbk.ac.uk/index.php/19/article/view/530/533>> [accessed 19 November 2014].

<sup>69</sup> Robert Emmett Long, ‘Henry James’s Apprenticeship – the Hawthorne Aspect’, *American Literature*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (May, 1976), pp. 194-216 (p. 208).

the *Juno*: ‘I followed his advice, and, as a friend, I gave up my sketch. But an artist is an artist, and I secretly longed to attempt one’ (27).

The Count, who desires the statue without an outlet for the energy he longs to possess, becomes himself possessed. The superintendent identifies the impotence of his master’s relationship with the statue: ‘When a beautiful woman is in stone, all one can do is look at her’ (28). Jane Thomas’ description of the Count’s ‘descent into the “underworld” of a pagan past (in Freudian terms, the id)’ identifies the paradox of this non-artistic engagement with Roman things: the Count has not, in fact, brought the statue to light; rather he has been taken underground by the statue.<sup>70</sup> The Count’s experience is an escalation of that of *Middlemarch*’s Dorothea, also a newlywed in Rome, upon whom Roman things acted as ‘an electric shock’, ‘urged themselves on her’ and ‘took possession of her young sense’ (*Middlemarch*, 193). Like the Count, Dorothea has no outlet for Roman artistic energy; the Count’s encounter with the full force of the recently-excavated *Juno* is a powerful reiteration of Dorothea’s experience of being overpowered.

J. Hillis Miller’s discussion of ‘The Last of the Valerii’ argues that a ‘story about prosopopoeia takes as its subject the conditions of its possibility of being. This might be a dangerous operation, since a story may end up by demonstrating its own impossibility and so dissolve before the reader’s eyes.’<sup>71</sup> The fact that, unlike the possibility of the narrator’s sketch of the *Juno*, the narrative itself does not ‘dissolve’ is explained by the alternative outcome of the erotic encounter with an excavated Roman thing described in Story and Hawthorne’s accounts of the excavation of the *Porta Portese Venus*. Unlike the native Roman Count, who was reluctant to initiate excavations and has no purpose for the energy they released, Story and Hawthorne’s position as expatriate artists leads their accounts to focus on the artistic and creative potential of the statue. Their sexualisation of the *Venus* demonstrates, in this context, a desire to possess its artistic energy: the removal of a ‘chip of wood’ from ‘her beautiful lips’ enables not only sexual, but energetic access. Just as the abstract energy

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<sup>70</sup> Jane Thomas, ‘The Classical Statue in Late Victorian Literature,’ *The Yearbook of English Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 1/2, The Arts in Victorian Literature (2010), pp. 246-272 (p. 258-259).

<sup>71</sup> Robert Emmett Long, p. 208.

<sup>71</sup> Jane Thomas, pp. 258-259.

of the statue becomes ‘vivified’ in their perceptions, their own accounts are examples of the *prosopopoeia* Hillis Miller identifies in James’ story.

Both Story and Hawthorne focus on the incomplete, fragmentary nature of the discovery as a way of exploring their own creative role as artists in relation to the excavated energy.<sup>72</sup> While the *Juno* in *The Last of the Valerii* is discovered in its entirety (its hand detached but still present), the *Venus* encountered by Story and Hawthorne is incomplete in a way that enables them to engage imaginatively with what is missing. Jennifer Wallace’s examination of this eroticism in the archaeological context focuses on the seduction of the incomplete:

[T]he earth teases the archaeologist with its promise of material evidence, the literal fulfilment of the search for answers [...]. It entices with the possibility of direct access with the past or literal, unequivocal knowledge but also, in its ellipses, absences and mysteries, can also be interpreted metaphorically. (J. Wallace, 81)

Ruskin argued ‘that mist and all its phenomena have been made delightful to us, since our happiness as thinking beings must depend upon our being content to accept only partial knowledge’;<sup>73</sup> Robert K. Martin supports this in his discussion of depictions of partially-concealed sculpture in *The Marble Faun*, citing Roland Barthes: ‘it is the *faille*, or gap, that provides *jouissance*’ (35). In the case of the Porta Portese *Venus*, the titillation in Hawthorne’s description returns repeatedly to the statue’s fragmentary nature: he observes ‘the marks on the bosom and thigh where the fingers had touched’ (*Notebooks*, 516). He describes profound satisfaction at seeing the statue’s fragments combined, its incompleteness partially reversed: the proprietor placed ‘a round block of marble [...] upon the shattered neck of the Venus; and behold, it was her head and face, perfect, all but the nose! Even in spite of this

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<sup>72</sup> Leonard Barkan notes that the use of fragment was not only ‘quintessentially Romantic’ but also a feature of Renaissance artwork: ‘The non finito is not a mere romantic anachronism but a real expression of early modern artistic culture.’ As such, the nineteenth-century encounter with fragments in Rome was one that acknowledged and developed a long artistic heritage of engaging with and making fragments in the city. See Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 119, 207.

<sup>73</sup> John Ruskin, ‘Modern Painters’, in *The Works of John Ruskin*, Vol. 4 (London: George Allen, 1904), p. 89.

mutilation, it seemed immediately to light up and vivify the entire figure' (*Notebooks*, 517). This moment almost satisfies the archaeologist's yearning for 'direct access' to and 'unequivocal knowledge' of the whole – a moment imagined in the energetic terms of 'lighting up' and 'vivifying'. However, the absent nose of the Venus presents the 'ellipses, absences and mysteries' and 'partial knowledge' of Jennifer Wallace's idea; the statue continues to tantalise. Earlier in the *Notebooks*, Hawthorne offers an analysis of the effect of ruins, concluding that, 'Whatever beauty there may be in a Roman ruin is the remnant of what was beautiful originally' (58). Roman things, for Hawthorne, embody the kind of loss and absence of beauty that allows him, as an artist, to participate in the cycling of artistic energy by engaging with them.

Christopher Woodward argues that 'the artist is inevitably at odds with the archaeologist. In the latter discipline the scattered fragments of stone are parts of a jigsaw, or clues to a puzzle to which there is only one answer [...] to the artist, by contrast, any answer which is imaginative is correct.' Woodward relates this argument to Roman things, noting that 'the Colosseum nourished artists and writers' because 'it was precisely the features which conflicted with the original "truth" of the Colosseum which triggered their creativity.'<sup>74</sup> Dickens attributes the fact that the Colosseum is 'full and running over with the lustiest life,' to its status as 'a ruin. God be thanked: a ruin!' (*Pictures from Italy*, 157). Its incompleteness enables it to come to life. The same idea is expressed by George Hillard in 1851, who writes that, 'If as a building the Colosseum was open to criticism, as a ruin it is perfect. The work of decay has stopped at the exact point required by taste and sentiment.'<sup>75</sup> This tension identified by Woodward is exploited by Hawthorne and Story in their accounts of the *Venus*: in the dual roles of archaeologist and artist they are able to invest their creative response to the incomplete with the authority of the archaeologist's insight. Bill Brown describes 'thingness' as a 'latency (the not yet formed or the not yet formable)', and so the creative potential of the incompleteness (the latency) of Roman things contributes to their power (5). The incompleteness of excavated things, therefore, allowed artists to access Roman artistic energy and harness it by creating their own literary or artistic responses.

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<sup>74</sup> Christopher Woodward, *In Ruins* (London: Vintage, 2002), p. 30.

<sup>75</sup> George Hillard, *Six Months in Italy*, Vol. 1 (New York: Ticknor & Company, 1853), p. 305.



## The Subterranean and the Subconscious

In his discussion of iterations and repetitions of the Pygmalion myth, Theodore Ziolkowski notes that though the obvious passage of energy in the scenario in which a statue comes to life is from the beholder to the statue, ‘the magic also runs in the other direction: not just from the person to the image, but also from the image back to the person’ (24). While the relevance of the Pygmalion myth to expatriate artists’ relationship to Roman things is discussed in relation to spiritualism in Chapter Three, Ziolkowski here demonstrates the psychological consequences of exposure to ‘vivified’ excavated statues such as the Porta Portese *Venus* and James’ *Juno*. *The Last of the Valerii*, writes Leon Edel, proposes ‘that it is dangerous to exhume dormant primeval things—and that civilized man does well to keep the primitive side of his nature properly interred.’<sup>76</sup> Suzi Naiburg argues that the story is ‘a study of what happens when a weak ego excavates the depth of the psyche.’<sup>77</sup> Both critics understand the excavation of the Count’s grounds as a form of psychological exploration. Key to the destructive action of the *Juno*’s energy on the Count is his status as a non-artist, discussed above in relation to mesmerism, and further clarified by a psychoanalytical lens: ‘If the unaided ego is not strong enough to confront the unconscious and mediate its energies, it will be overwhelmed as the Count’s is. The powerful forces within the psyche deserve to be respected. They can’t, however, be ignored without inviting dangerous repercussions’ (Naiburg, 202). Though presenting her argument in psychological terms, Naiburg leans on the language of energy that the expatriate artists of mid-century Rome understood well: the ‘force’ and ‘energies’ of the *Juno*, simultaneously contained within it and acting on the beholder to produce a psychological reaction, must be ‘mediated’. The Count, an ‘unaided ego’, but

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<sup>76</sup> Leon Edel in Henry James, *Stories of the Supernatural*, ed. by Leon Edel (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1971), p. 70.

<sup>77</sup> Suzi Naiburg, ‘Henry James Looks at the Unconscious in “The Last of the Valerii”’, *Literature and Psychology, Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference on Literature and Psychology, Urbino, July 6-9, 1990* (Lisbon: Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada, 1991), pp. 199-206 (p. 199). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

crucially also, a non-artist, has no mediating capacity: the force of the *Juno*, artistic and psychological, becomes destructive.

In contrast, the energy released by the Porta Portese *Venus* and accessed by Story and Hawthorne is channelled into their writing. It produces not only the two direct accounts of the excavation in *Roba di Roma* and the *Notebooks*, but reverberates through *The Marble Faun*. The scene in which Kenyon discovers an excavated *Venus* in the Campagna is a retelling of Hawthorne's own experience, in which Kenyon finds the statue's missing head and 'placed it on the slender neck of the newly discovered statue.':

It immediately lighted up and vivified the whole figure, endowing it with personality, soul, and intelligence. The beautiful Idea at once asserted its immortality, and converted that heap of forlorn fragments into a whole, as perfect to the mind, if not to the eye, as when the new marble gleamed with snowy lustre; nor was the impression marred by the earth that still hung upon the exquisitely graceful limbs, and even filled the lovely crevice of the lips. Kenyon cleared it away from between them, and almost deemed himself rewarded with a living smile. (*Marble Faun*, 329)

Hawthorne's narrative restores the *Venus* to its complete form and in doing so demonstrates the 'immortality' of the 'beautiful Idea' – an idea that 'lights up' and 'vivifies' the figure energetically. This is a quintessential Roman thing that possesses continuous, 'immortal' Roman energy. Full access to this energy is enabled by the clearing of the earth from the lips, just as it was in Hawthorne's description in the *Notebooks*. 'This,' writes Nina Baym, 'is the humanization of the life force, a paradigm of the artistic process as it should be.'<sup>78</sup> Again, the energy of the old thing is harnessed in Hawthorne's new art in *The Marble Faun*, and suggestive of Kenyon's own artistic process. The discovery of the statue is a precursor to the literal and physical reunion of Kenyon and Hilda.

In this context, it is notable that the episode of discovery is experienced by Kenyon as one of recognition. The statue is at once familiar in its composition, which 'the antique artist knew, and as all the world has seen, in the Venus de' Medici' and

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<sup>78</sup> Nina Baym. 'The Marble Faun: Hawthorne's Elegy for Art,' *The New England Quarterly* 44, no. 3 (1971), pp. 355-76 (p. 373). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

also a stand-in for the absent Hilda: 'I seek for Hilda, and find a marble woman!' (329). Appearing in place of Hilda, the object of Kenyon's sexual desire, the statue not only provokes artistic memory, but erotic memory. The eroticism of the moment is threefold, derived first from the 'striptease' of the Venus' emergence from the ground, her fingers 'protruding from the loose earth' and 'clinging soil'; second from the details given of the physicality of the 'poor, fragmentary woman' with her 'slender neck', 'exquisitely graceful limbs,' 'the lovely crevice of her lips' and 'her modest instincts'; and finally from the positioning of the scene in the novel in place of the anticipated reunion of lovers (328-9). At the end of the novel, when a reader anticipates the resolution of the marriage plot between Kenyon and Hilda, the statue appears: 'an Emperour would woo this tender marble, and win her proudly as an imperial bride!' (329). When Miriam, discussing the statue with Kenyon, asks, 'Does it not frighten you a little, like the apparition of a lovely woman that lived of old, and has long lain in the grave?' she highlights the relationship between the emergence of the Venus and the emergence of Kenyon's full erotic passions for Hilda. The scene proposes the uncanny nature of Roman things that are paradoxically old and new, revealed and recalled, and whose artistic energy is directly aligned with the artist's own subconscious.

Baym argues that, in Rome, Kenyon encounters the nature of artistic work: 'The artist's creative powers, he learns, are one with the life force that permeates nature. They rise from the subterranean depths of the self, are essentially erotic in character, and thoroughly abhorrent to society' (356). Baym's portrayal is in fact a description of the process by which expatriate artists accessed and used Roman artistic energy through the process of mining (excavating) it from the ground. The 'life force' she identifies was conceptualized as energy, as has been argued throughout this chapter. This final section considers how expatriate artists used the erotic encounter with Roman things as a method of harnessing energy from 'subterranean depths' that are both literal, in the form of the archaeological excavation, and the metaphorical: they exist within the artist's mind. The process of engaging with the Roman subterranean ran parallel to the artist's engagement with their own subconscious: these twin endeavours produced art that captured Roman energy.

When Freud considered the psychological elements of and parallels to archaeology, he reversed the relationship set up by John Collingwood Bruce in which the practice of digging down leads to the 'elevation' of the mind: for Freud, the

digging down of the archaeologist is not a facilitator of psychological elevation but rather a metaphor for psychological excavation. Freud drew a parallel between the work of the archaeologist and that of the analyst: the basic action, one of excavation, is shared, as is the process of deduction and imagining that subsequently seeks to piece together an absent, abstract whole. His work as an analyst ‘follow[s] the example of those discoverers whose good fortune it is to bring to the light of day after long burial the priceless though mutilated relics of antiquity. I have restored what is missing’.<sup>79</sup> Conversely and correspondingly, archaeologists of the twenty-first century argue that their task is to interrogate memory rather than places or things: ‘[a]rchaeology deals with the material memory of the past,’ writes Laurent Olivier. ‘[I]t is the work of the archaeologist to study the way in which memory is constituted over time, in which case the present, understood as ‘nowness’, would become the locus for interpreting the past.’<sup>80</sup> As a psychological as well as a physical pursuit, archaeology is intimately concerned with accessing ideas and memories. Dickens identified this relationship when, after viewing the marble mines at Carrara, he considers the ‘exquisite shapes, replete with grace and thought, and delicate repose,’ of the sculptor’s finished works as the products of two forms of mine: the literal quarry, and the artist’s mind: ‘I thought, my God! How many quarries of human hearts and souls, capable of far more beautiful results, are left shut up and mouldering away’ (*Pictures from Italy*, 142). For expatriate artists in Rome, the psychological process of archaeology was inseparable from the process of making art.

Freud applied his thinking about archaeology to Rome specifically in *Civilisation and its Discontents* (1930), in which the city itself becomes a comparison to the human mind. He asks his reader to imagine,

that Rome is not a place where people live, but a psychical entity with a similarly long, rich past, in which nothing that ever took shape has passed away and in which all previous phases of development exist beside the most recent. For Rome this would mean that on the Palatine hill the imperial palaces and the Septizonium of Septimus Severus still rose to their original height, that [...] the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus

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<sup>79</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Dora: An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria* (New York: Touchstone, 1967), p. 7.

<sup>80</sup> Laurent Olivier, *The Dark Abyss of Time: Archaeology and Memory*, trans. by Arthur Greenspan (Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 2011), p. 99.

would once more stand on the site of the Palazzo Caffarelli, without here being any need to dismantle the latter structure, and indeed the temple would be seen not only in its later form, which it assumed during the imperial age, but also in its earliest [...]. And the observer would perhaps need only to shift his gaze or his position in order to see the one or the other.<sup>81</sup>

Freud's sentences turn in circles and knots, piling on top of each other like his imagined, palimpsestic and simultaneous mind-city. He evokes in this passage a 'psychical entity' that is not only a thought experiment, but also a description of the literal experience of artists of the mid century, whose conception of artistic energy in Rome was informed by a rule borrowed from thermodynamics that 'the energy of the universe is constant', and thus gave rise to a genuine belief that, in artistic-energetic terms, 'nothing that ever took shape has passed away.' When Hawthorne describes the 'precious relic[s] of the past' that 'you can almost spurn [...] out of the ground with your foot' (*Notebooks*, 201), and Story writes that 'Dead generations lie under your feet', they are inhabiting this layered, over-written city, in which their own footsteps disturb not only levels of soil, but levels of time, to uncover artistic energy that, while new to them, is itself ancient (*Roba*, 314). Freud uses the analogy of Rome to argue that 'nothing once formed in the mind could ever perish, that everything survives in some way or other, and is capable under certain conditions of being brought to light' (*Civilization*, 7). Expatriate artists' perception of Roman energy cycling through the artworks of the city across time meant that the city behaved in the way that, here, Freud imagines the 'mind' does. By accessing the coherent energetic entity contained within Rome, artists were able to 'bring to light' old energy in the form of new works.

This notion is explored throughout the *The Marble Faun* in the novel's treatment of the Model, who, emerging from the catacombs as a manifestation of Roman energy is put to work by Miriam as a model for her art. The Model's status as an excavated Roman thing—a 'spectre' that 'shap[es] himself [...] suddenly out of the void darkness of the catacomb'—is reinforced by Baym's observation that in the novel's "'guide-book" descriptions of the city', Hawthorne 'carefully associates the model with every antique and historical sight. The model appears and reappears at

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<sup>81</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Civilisation and its Discontents* (London: Penguin, 2002), pp. 8-9. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

each viewpoint, a wicked genius of place. He is therefore [...] a personification of the weighty, oppressive, killing spirit of Rome' (Baym, 359).

The catacombs from which the Model emerges are described as a space of both bodily and psychological disintegration: 'the shape of a human body was discernible in white ashes, into which the entire mortality of a man or woman had resolved itself' (*Marble Faun*, 21). It is from this point of disintegration in darkness that the Model emerges. He is introduced first in the context of Donatello's fear of ghosts, described as an 'apparition', 'phantom' and 'spectre,' and then as an artwork, an 'antique Satyr'. He is transformed from the insubstantial—'indistinctly seen, floating away', 'nothing but a shadow'—to a material being with 'footsteps' and 'features'; his prosopopoeia is described in terms of being brought 'to light': 'first into the torch-light, thence into the sunshine' (25-27). The epithet 'Model' is applied to the figure almost from the first moment of his appearance in the narrative, long before Miriam begins to draw him. He is encountered immediately, then, in the context of his future role as a subject of art. Alison Smith, in her discussion of nudity in Victorian art, notes that in the 1860s, 'antique sculptural prototypes abound in the classicising paintings of this period' and that these 'functioned to establish a distance between the nude and the artist's model, reinforcing the aesthetic message of beauty.'<sup>82</sup> A contemporary depiction of Venus, then, was distanced from the crude nudity of the living model, couched within the elevated realm of antique sculpture. Hawthorne's figuring of the Model as an excavated object like the many excavated sculptures of the period collapses this distance. Jonathan Auerbach argues that the Model is 'a key intermediary between the animating idea and the fulfilled artistic creation, a compulsive spectre who obsessively dogs Miriam's footsteps like some vaguely formed suggestion from the past that demands expression' (110). In fact, as a manifestation of the continuous Roman energy running through all Roman art across time, the Model embodies the animating idea, the intermediary, *and* the artistic creation. A Roman thing encapsulates all three: the thought and the thing of Jameson's formulation, and also the middle quality.

The transition from ghost to artwork to Model (and then, subsequently, to art again in Miriam's studio) is both a literal excavation and a psychological one that

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<sup>82</sup> Alison Smith, *The Victorian Nude* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), p. 119.

mirrors other artistic processes of creating art in Rome. After emerging from below ground, the Model ‘haunts’ Miriam. He is ‘often admitted to her studio’ and ‘left his features, or some shadow or reminiscence of them, in many of her sketches and pictures’ (27). In his initial description of the Model, Hawthorne uses the word ‘shadow’ to suggest his abstract status, understood as artistic energy, before his manifestation in the catacombs; its use again here to describe the Model’s presence in Miriam’s art indicates that she has successfully harnessed that same energy. Nonetheless, the dynamic between Miriam and her Model is not a straightforward exchange: rather, there is a power struggle in which the Model ‘tops from below’, in Connor’s terms: ‘You know the power that I have over you,’ the Model tells Miriam (75). This is figured as a sexual struggle for domination: ‘That iron chain, of which some of the massive links were round her feminine waist, and the others in his ruthless hand,—or which, perhaps, bound the pair together by a bond equally torturing to each,—must have been forged in some such unhallowed furnace’ (73). The connection between the expatriate artist and the Roman thing is sexualized and energetic: the ‘furnace’ that forged the link signals that energetic force, powered by excavated energy that, in Rome, is mined as coal is mined elsewhere. As the artist accesses the energy of the thing, she nonetheless experiences the force of the thing acting upon her. Miriam, a female artist, is just as susceptible to the power of the sexualized Roman thing as Story and Hawthorne were to that of the *Porta Portese Venus*, a dynamic acknowledged by Hillis Miller who, rejecting the sexualized fantasy of prosopopoeia in retellings of the Pygmalion myth as ‘exclusively male’, provides examples of the reverse in Kleist’s ‘Der Findling’, Hardy’s ‘Barbara of the House of Grebe’ and James’ ‘The Last of the Valerii’. Hillis Miller acknowledges that ‘[t]hough these stories are by male writers, they would at least authorize saying that men have ascribed to women as well as to men the error of taking prosopopoeia literally’ (7).

The Model is not only a Roman thing, containing energy that acts on Miriam while also being harnessed by her; he is also a psychological fact, a manifested memory. The chapter in which the Model is first encountered is titled, ‘Subterranean Reminiscences’, and thus exploits the same relationship between the subterranean and the subconscious that Freud later used in his explorations of analysis, and that Hawthorne also applies to Kenyon’s encounter with the *Venus*. Told retrospectively, the story of the Model’s arrival in the narrative is situated by the chapter title in the realm of memory rather than present action. Furthermore, Miriam recognizes the

Model, even as he is presented as a new manifestation in the narrative: ‘your heart trembled with horror when you recognized me,’ the Model says, ‘but you did not guess that there was an equal horror in my own!’ (74). This is, on one level, an expression of the Model’s thingness. He embodies the moment ‘when the object becomes the Other, when the sardine can looks back, when the mute idol speaks, when the subject experiences the object as uncanny’, that W. J. T. Mitchell considered the point at which objects become things (156-7). However, in this exchange, the Model is not only expressing his potent energy as a Roman thing; he is also describing his psychological relationship to Miriam. He is part of her past, both recognisable and new.

This recognition is, as is explored in Kenyon’s encounter with the Venus later in the novel, a key element of the expatriate encounter with excavated Roman things. Archaeologist Alfredo Ganzález-Ruibal explores the ‘complex relationship between cognition and recognition’ in archaeology in relation to the ‘the concept of *anamnesis* in Plato [...]. Anamnesis—like psychoanalysis—is making unconscious knowledge come to light: knowledge, according to Plato, is already in us, but we need an active effort to disclose it.’ Ganzález-Ruibal links this process to ‘the idea of terror: recognition causes compassion or terror, as when Oedipus recognizes his mother’.<sup>83</sup> In the Roman context, the Platonic knowledge that is ‘already in us’ was perceived as Roman energy: continuous, unending, and thus, even when it is newly exposed, never truly new. Miriam recognises Roman energy as part of her own psychological history; the depths of the catacombs were also the depths of Miriam’s own consciousness. This experience is inherent to the artist’s practice of creating new work: in moments of archaeological recognition, ‘something that is inherited as having-been-there,’ writes Dušan Borić, ‘is synthesised with fresh and free possibilities to choose repressed and neglected aspects of what is now abolished and yet still present (*i.e.* trace).’<sup>84</sup> Borić’s ‘trace’—‘what is not abolished and yet still present’ is for Miriam the Roman energy with which her own psychology is now entirely bound up, and which, even as it horrifies her, opens up creative possibilities. The imaginary Rome that Freud conceived, which was ‘not a place where people live, but a psychical entity

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<sup>83</sup> Alfredo Ganzález-Ruibal, ‘Returning to where we have never been: Excavating the ruins of modernity’, *Ruin Memories*, pp. 367-389 (p. 370).

<sup>84</sup> Dušan Borić (Ed.), ‘Introduction’, *Archaeology and Memory* (Oxford and Oakville: Oxbow Books, 2010), pp. 1-34 (p. 26).



with a similarly long, rich past, in which nothing that ever took shape has passed away and in which all previous phases of development exist beside the most recent', was in fact, for expatriate artists who accessed and participated in the cycling of Roman energy, both a psychological and a physical reality.

At the end of *The Last of the Valerii*, the problematic *Juno* is reburied, thus releasing the Count from her devastating influence. The same is attempted by Miriam in *The Marble Faun*, whose glance inspires Donatello to throw the Model into a 'great, dusky gap, impenetrably deep'. However, the Model is a Roman thing that resolutely refuses to die. After he is thrown into the chasm by Donatello, the Model is encountered by Miriam, Donatello and Kenyon in the form of the dead Capuchin: his progression from 'Miriam's persecutor of many past months' to 'the vagabond of the preceding night' to 'the dead Capuchin of today [...] resembled one of those unaccountable changes and interminglings of identity, which so often occur among the personages of a dream' (147). The energy of Roman things moves between, but is not fixed within, them. When the friends observe that 'a little stream of blood had begun to ooze from the dead monk's nostrils,' they see the continuous cycling of energy in the 'Eternal City'. The artistic energy that Miriam harnessed from the Model and its continued reverberations throughout the novel, will be discussed in the subsequent chapter in relation to recycling and copying; Hawthorne's representation of the Model in the early stages of *The Marble Faun* signals a Roman energy that expatriate artists viewed as continuous and constant, and which Freud would go on to exploit when he wrote, of his imaginary city, that 'nothing that ever took shape has passed away'.

'We are moved by things,' writes Sara Ahmed. 'And in being moved, we make things' (33). Expatriate artists 'made' the energetic Roman things they encountered by their intense physical and psychological responses to them. Their access to Roman energy via excavation was one stage in a system by which they conceived of themselves as participating in a continuous energetic cycle, drawing from the 'Providential' mine in the city, and, ultimately, contributing their own artworks. When Hawthorne describes the Model's 'features, or some shadow or reminiscence of them, in many of [Miriam's] sketches and pictures,' he is drawing attention not only to Miriam's use of Roman energy, but to the Roman energy from which his own narrative is created (27). '[T]he Model, who is the source of Miriam's art, as well as her compulsive guilt, also generates the primary plot of Hawthorne's own work of

art,' writes Auerbach (111); Hawthorne describes his narrative as 'a succession of sinister events [that have] followed one spectral figure out of that gloomy labyrinth!' (*Marble Faun*, 331). In this way, Rome the Mine was conceived of as a model of sustainable excavation of resources that industrialists and chemists were unable to recreate. The accountant William Waterson argued, in 1843:

The only legitimate end to be aimed at by speculators on the duration of coal, is the prevention of all waste. If, to the best of our power, we husband our resources, we may safely leave to posterity the management of their own interest,—the task of compensating for a diminution of mineral resources by an increase of mechanical skill and ingenuity.<sup>85</sup>

The expatriate artists' project in Rome was one that attempted to 'prevent all waste' and 'husband [the city's] resources' by the production of new work using old energy. However, the second rule of thermodynamics remained an unavoidable concern in a city that presented images of decay at every corner. The following chapter will examine how the 'mechanical skill and ingenuity' of artists in Rome who copied rather than created art related to notions of both recycled energy and loss.

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<sup>85</sup> William Waterson, *Cyclopedia of Commerce, Mercantile Law, Finance, and Commercial Geography* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1843), p. 164.

## Chapter Two

### Rome the Factory: Recycled energy, repetition and the anxious mechanics of copying

You remind me of a story I heard the other day of an English swell, whose education [...] was not liberally endowed with English literature. Some of his friends persuaded him to go and hear 'Hamlet,' which was then playing in London. On his return he was asked how he liked it, and he said, 'Very nice, very nice, but awfully full of quotations.'

William Wetmore Story, *Conversations in a Studio*<sup>1</sup>

#### I. RECOGNITION AND REPETITION IN ROME

##### Confronting Ideas of New and Old in an Eternal City

The sexual thrill of the discovery of the Porta Portese *Venus* is heightened in the written accounts of the excavation by Story and Hawthorne by an emphasis not only on discovery and release, but on recognition. Just as Miriam recognizes her Model, and Kenyon recognizes his own excavated *Venus*, Story and Hawthorne were confronted with a vision of a Roman thing that was paradoxically new and familiar. Newspaper articles reporting the discovery approached the statue from a comparative angle, as a version of a familiar form: the *Morning Post* described the statue as 'generally considered as likely to rivalise the reputation of the Medicean Venus',<sup>2</sup> in the *Daily News* it was 'similar to that of the Venus de Medici',<sup>3</sup> the *Morning Chronicle* ran the story under the headline 'Another Venus de Medicis' [sic]<sup>4</sup> and the *Birmingham Daily Post* as 'Another Venus.'<sup>5</sup> For Hawthorne, the statue resembled, 'the Venus de' Medici, but, as we all thought, more beautiful than that' (*Notebooks*, 516). Story describes it as 'the figure of the Paphian goddess with which we are all so

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<sup>1</sup> William Wetmore Story, *Conversations in a Studio* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1890), p. 91. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>2</sup> 'Affairs of Rome—Antiquarian Discoveries', *Morning Post*, 22 April 1859, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> 'The Papal States', *Daily News*, 23 April 1859, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> 'Another Venus de Medicis', *Morning Chronicle*, 26 April 1859, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> 'Another Venus', *Birmingham Daily Post*, 9 May 1859, p. 1.

familiar' (*Roba*, 320). The tension is apparent, particularly in Story's account, between the sense of discovery and that of recognition. Story's vocabulary is unstable in describing the statue: it is 'new' and 'new-born', but also 'familiar' and a member of a 'resuscitated family' (*Roba*, 320). Hawthorne works to dissolve this tension by asserting that 'It is supposed to be the original, from which the Venus de' Medici was copied'; suggesting that if this statue is 'original' it can logically still be considered 'new' despite that familiarity of its appearance (*Notebooks*, 516).

This experience of simultaneous encounter and re-encounter was a pervasive one in expatriate experience of Rome. Norman Vance notes that, as early as the eighteenth century, prospective tourists could acquaint themselves with the city and its sites prior to their arrival so that the specific sights and experiences of Rome were clearly anticipated by the first-time visitor.

There was a constant interplay of pictorial representation, text, and direct observation. Eighteenth-century tourists had been able to buy [...] views of (mainly ancient) Rome available singly or bound up in sets. Well-appointed eighteenth- and nineteenth-century libraries would have the four volumes of Piranesi's *Antichita Romane*[.] (18)

By the 1840s, 'the technologies of mass production and demands of increased literacy [had] revived the wood-engraving industry'; the 'launch of Charles Knight's *Penny Magazine* in 1832, and, a decade later, the first illustrated weekly, the *Illustrated London News*, revolutionized print culture and the reading experienced of the popular audience.'<sup>6</sup> This led to a democratization of access to both visual and print cultures and an 'emergent mass culture':<sup>7</sup> Dehn Gilmore identifies 'a trend of diffusion and popularization that was extraordinary in its scope and scale', quoting the *Illustrated London News*' description of reaching 'everyone between "the wealthier classes and their dependents"' (9).

Images of Rome, access to which in previous decades had been available but limited to the elite, were now widely distributed in woodcuts in penny magazines and

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<sup>6</sup> Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, *Poetry, Pictures, and Popular Publishing: The Illustrated Gift Book and Victorian Visual Culture, 1855-1875* (Columbus: Ohio University Press, 2011), p. 16.

<sup>7</sup> Patricia Anderson, *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture: 1790-1860* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 194.

illustrated publications. The *Illustrated London News* ran frequent articles on the excavation of new statues under headlines such as ‘Greek Statue Recently Discovered in Rome’ and ‘Sculpture and Bronzes at Rome’, and provided images of the cityscape alongside prose and poetry about the city.<sup>8</sup> So fully integrated was the ‘print, visual and material culture of travel’<sup>9</sup> that, in 1844, an *Illustrated London News* article on the history of wood-engraving used an illustration of Michelangelo’s ‘Prophet Jeremiah’ in the Sistine Chapel to demonstrate woodcut technique: by the mid century, Rome had become a mass-produced visual phenomenon. ‘As a result,’ notes Andrew Szegedy-Maszak, nineteenth-century visitors [to Rome] brought with them a sense of familiarity that was absent from Egypt and Greece,’<sup>10</sup> and furthermore, as Jonathan Culler describes, ‘[t]he existence of reproductions is what makes something an original, authentic, the real thing—the original of which the souvenirs, postcards, statues etc. are reproductions—and by surrounding ourselves with reproductions we represent to ourselves [...] the possibility of authentic experiences in other times and in other places.’<sup>11</sup> Augustus Hare’s *Walks in Rome* (1871) opens with an exploration of this phenomenon:

An arrival in Rome is very different to that in any other town in Europe. It is coming to a place new and yet most familiar, strange and yet so well known. When travellers arrive [...] at Rome and go to the Coliseum, it is to visit an object whose appearance has been familiar to them from childhood[.]<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> ‘Greek Statue Recently Discovered in Rome,’ *Illustrated London News*, 29 December 1849, pp. 7-8 (p.7); ‘Sculpture and Bronzes at Rome,’ *Illustrated London News*, 26 August 1848, pp. 13-14 (p. 13). See also, ‘Ancient and Modern Rome,’ *Illustrated London News*, 6 January 1849, pp. 4-5 (p. 4); ‘Modern Rome,’ *Illustrated London News*, 4 May 1850, pp.22-24 (p. 22).

<sup>9</sup> Brian H. Murray, ‘Introduction: Forms of Travel, Modes of Transport’, in *Travel Writing, Visual Culture and Form*, ed. by Mary Henes and Brian H. Murray (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2016), p. iv.

<sup>10</sup> Andrew Szegedy-Maszak, ‘Introduction’ in, *Antiquity & Photography: Early Views of Ancient Mediterranean Sites*, ed. by Claire L. Lyons, John K. Papadopoulos, Lindsey S. Stewart and Andrew Szegedy-Maszak (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2005), pp. 2-21 (p. 17).

<sup>11</sup> Johnathan Culler, ‘The Semiotics of Tourism’, in *Framing the Sign: Criticism and its Institutions* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Augustus Hare, *Walks in Rome* (London: Strahan, 1871), p. 1.

When visitors arrived in Rome for the first time, the impression was one both of familiarity and powerful authenticity.

Rome, furthermore, differed not only from other modern cities, but also from the other classical cities with which nineteenth-century consumers of print media were well acquainted: ‘Unlike Troy before Schliemann’s excavations, or ancient Nineveh before Layard explored it, this was no buried city of legend and the literary imagination but a palpable, living and continuing city’ (Norman Vance, 19). Rome existed simultaneously in easily accessible, affordable, portable and distributable literature, but also in its fixed manifestation in Italy, which itself was increasingly accessible as technologies of travel developed throughout the century.<sup>13</sup> ‘[T]ravel to Rome was no longer restricted to the affluent and ostensibly well-educated class whose predecessors had taken the Grand Tour’; Andrew Szegedy-Maszak observes that, as the century progressed, ‘[f]oreign tourists came increasingly from a middle class’ (116). This dual iteration—literary/depicted/printed and living—produced the phenomenon of the Tauchnitz editions of *The Marble Faun*, which are discussed at the end of this chapter: the books and the practices around them combined the culture of tourism and direct encounter with that of print and mass production. Furthermore, the combination of the Rome of print culture and the living city itself created the conditions in which visitors to the city saw for the first time something they had long known and understood. When Catherine Winkworth arrived in Rome with Elizabeth Gaskell and Gaskell’s daughters in the spring of 1857, they brought with them exactly this degree of foreknowledge of what they were about to see; Winkworth described the experience as one of sustained recognition. As they approached the city, they were ‘looking out for the dome of St. Peter’s’, anticipating the view before seeing it for the first time; ‘At last we saw it over a ridge, and all nearly broke our necks with stretching out of the carriage to look at’ (2: 110). The process became more intense as they made their first journey through Rome’s streets: ‘We came in close to St. Peter’s, and began exclaiming, as we recognised the places: “Look! The Colonnade—the fountains—the Vatican—St. Angelo.” It seemed like a dream, seeing them first dimly in the night’ (2: 111).

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<sup>13</sup> See Pulham, p. 83; Robert K. Martin and Leland S. Person, ‘Introduction’, *Roman Holidays*, p. 1.

In his *Notebooks*, Hawthorne claims to have avoided this experience, and formed an entirely original first impression of the city.

If my wits had not been too much congealed, and my fingers too numb,  
I should like to have kept a minute journal of my feelings and  
impressions during the past fortnight. It would have shown modern  
Rome in an aspect in which it has never yet been depicted. (54)

However, this ‘new’ depiction of Rome is never recorded; the absence of first impressions of the city in Hawthorne’s account conversely assumes a kind of familiarity both in himself and his reader. The new city, in fact, is a kind of hallucination of Hawthorne’s ‘feverish influenza’, and relies on the shared understanding of what the city is that he claims to have seen differently. *Roba di Roma* similarly dispatches with the need to relate ‘first impressions’ and instead opens with the Story family’s ‘return for the third time to Rome’. The positioning of this return at the opening of the book on Rome, however, implies that it is as much of a first encounter as is reasonably possible: there can be no first impression of Rome; it has always already been experienced. Whether for a first-time visitor, or third, every encounter is simultaneously a return. Story describes a lengthy journey towards the city over the opening pages, detailing ‘miles, and miles up and down’ of ‘obstruction and tediousness’ and delaying the arrival, until, ‘At last, towards sundown, we stopped at the Porta Cavalleggieri where [...] we were detained but a minute,—and then we were in Rome.’ The mood of the narrative shifts with the arrival in the city from the tedium of the approach to elation: ‘We were in Rome! This one moment of surprised sensation is worth the journey from Civita Vecchia. Entered by no other gate, is Rome so suddenly and completely possessed’ (*Roba*, 4). This ‘surprised sensation’, on a third visit to the city, is as key to the encounter as the recognition itself, and produces the same tension described by Story and Hawthorne on viewing the Porta Portese Venus: shock and familiarity combined.

This chapter explores the experience of uncanny recognition described by mid-century visitors to Rome in the context of ideas about the recycling of energy and anxiety surrounding the idea of copying. Artists who moved to Rome in order to access and harness the energy they conceived as flowing from its artworks, ruins and excavations, as discussed in the previous chapter, found their relationship to Romantic constructions of the artist’s work as ‘spontaneous creation’ were complicated: if they

were simply absorbing and repeating artistic energy already in existence, which was the common justification for coming to Rome, what was the relation of the artist to the notion of creativity and ownership of creative work? In entering the closed system of the 'Eternal City', what room was there for truly 'new' art? These questions were particularly pressing for the neoclassical sculptors whose practical process and artistic vision were founded on systems of replication, but also concerned writers grappling with debates regarding ownership and copyright of written work in the age of mass (re)production and print culture. To engage with art in Rome during this period was to engage with multiple levels of copying, and thus the work expatriates produced in and about the city was itself preoccupied with questions of authenticity and replication. The relationship between repetition and copying was fraught, and led to meditations on the meaning and value of 'original' artworks that anticipated Benjamin's formulation of the 'aura' in relation to the challenges of mechanical reproduction. This chapter engages with various forms, and terms for those forms, of reproduction, considering first the relationship between inspiration and the recycling of energy in artists' accounts of their own creativity in Rome, and then discussing the ways in which this recycling was imagined as translation, copying, manufacture, reprinting, forgery, plagiarism, and in a pure 'spiritual' form that participated fully in the cyclical systems of Roman recycling and repetition. Finally, the various strands of print and material culture, mass production and the spiritual preservation of Roman energy come together in the practices enabled by Tauchnitz editions of *The Marble Faun*, in which tourists pasted their own mass-produced images of Rome, and thus themselves participated in recycling of Roman energy.

### **Inspiration and the Receptive Imagination**

The experience of entering into Rome's creative system was analogous with the idea of 'inspiration' in accounts that described the process as one of absorbing artistic energy. Descriptions of Roman inspiration in the second half of the century formulated the cycle of Roman energy as one that passed from the city and its things to the artist, and was then channeled by the artist into new artworks. The energy of the Porta Portese *Venus* powered the narratives of its excavation and the subsequent reiterations of that moment in works of fiction, and this process was experienced over



and over again by artists who considered their presence in Rome essential to their powers to create work. In Story's *Conversations in a Studio* Mallett argues that 'genius [is] a receptive capacity, and not a creative one'. He describes the artistic process as one in which the artist acts as an incubator for received ideas:

Inspiration is the inbreathing of an influence from without and above, that can only really live in us and become an essential part of us when the interior nature is in a condition to be fecundated. The individual mind is, as it were, the matrix, which is impregnated by the universal mind, and then alone can it conceive. It cannot of itself create. When all is fit and the spirit of man is receptive, the idea suddenly comes upon us without our will and without our power to compel or resist its coming. It is received and quickened within our life and being, and takes from outward nature only its body and organism. [...] No one thing in nature makes itself by itself. There is a double germ, a double action, a passive and active, an influence and an effluence, in everything. (*Conversations*, 149)

The artistic energy of the universe, in other words, is constant. It behaves, like all other forms of energy, according to the rules laid out by Tyndall:

The law of conservation rigidly excludes both creation and annihilation. Waves may change to ripples, and ripples to waves, [...] asteroids may aggregate into suns, suns may invest their energy in florae and faunae, and florae and faunae may melt in air — the flux of power is eternally the same. It rolls in music through the ages, while the manifestations of physical life, as well as the display of physical phenomena, are but modulations of its rhythm.<sup>14</sup>

The artist 'inbreathes' inspiration 'from without and above' in the same way that 'waves may change to ripples, and ripples to waves': energy transfers between 'manifestations of physical life', but remains constant. 'No one thing in nature makes itself by itself' writes Story, just as, for Tyndall, '[t]he law of conservation rigidly excludes [...] creation'. The music Tyndall describes as 'roll[ing] through the ages' is 'received and quickened' by the artist in Story's formulation. Nothing is created, it is only received and shaped by a 'fit' artist; 'the higher part of his art—the creative,

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<sup>14</sup> John Tyndall, *Heat Considered as a Mode of Motion: Being a Course of Twelve Lectures* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green: 1863), p. 449. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

the ideal part—is done through him, and not by him’, Mallet says (*Conversations*, 150).

Rome, as a site of unique creative power and energy, was the ideal place in which an artist could ‘receive’ inspiration. The young sculptor Roderick in Henry James’ *Roderick Hudson* describes his experience of Rome after his arrival from New England in terms of absorption: ‘let us close no doors that open upon Rome. For this, for the mind, must be the most breathable air in the world—it gives a new sense to the old Pax Romana. [...] I want to pause and breathe; I want to give the desired vision a chance to descend’ (88). Roderick’s inhalation of Roman energy, via which his ‘desired vision’ will come to him, causes him to feel ‘Wise with the wisdom of the ages and the taste of a thousand fountains’ (86). Anthony Trollope, describing the process by which Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote *The Marble Faun*, used similar terms: like the fictional Roderick, Hawthorne experienced a ‘wonderful change [...] when he had travelled out of Massachusetts into Italy’. The ‘flavour’ of *The Marble Faun* is ‘entirely that of Rome and of Italian scenery. His receptive imagination took an impress from what was around him, and then gave it forth again with that wonderful power of expression which belonged to him.’<sup>15</sup> This ‘receptive imagination’ was described by Ruskin as the artist’s ‘acceptant capacity’ and was key to creating valuable art: ‘*The production of effectual value, therefore, always involves two needs: first, the production of a thing essentially useful, then the production of the capacity to use it.* Where the intrinsic value and acceptant capacity come together, there is effectual value, or wealth’ [original emphasis].<sup>16</sup>

After having absorbed, accepted, or taken ‘an impress’ of, the city’s energy, the artist’s role was to process and convert it. Roderick absorbs so much, at the beginning of his stay in Rome, that he experiences it as a kind of overflow, like Dorothea’s ‘electric shock’: an uncomfortable surplus of energy: ‘I’ve seen enough for the present; I’ve reached the top of the hill. I’ve an indigestion of impressions; I must work them off before I go in for any more’ (85). What links Roderick’s ‘indigestion’ to Dorothea’s ‘electric shock’ is a sensation of having received, experienced or taken on—‘inbreathed’ in Story’s term—a surfeit of energy, described

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<sup>15</sup> Anthony Trollope, ‘The Genius of Nathaniel Hawthorne’, *North American Review*, No. 274, September, 1879, pp. 204-222 (p. 222).

<sup>16</sup> Ruskin quoted in F. J. Stimson, ‘Ruskin as a Political Economist’, p. 419.

respectively in metaphors of eating and electricity. Roderick's formulation places the artist as mediator between the energy of the city and the energy of the artwork he will create. He must 'work [it] off', digest it, before he can absorb more. To work as an artist in Rome was to position oneself in this mediating role, receiving and converting; the work of the artist was thus to *make* art, rather than create it.

### **Recycled Tales of Roman Recognition**

The combination of the sense of recognition experienced by artists in Rome with that of receiving 'an impress' from the city that could be transferred to their own work, created a powerful sense of the circularity of artistic energy in nineteenth-century visitors. The first Roman scene of *Middlemarch* is one that highlights the dynamic cyclical relationship in the city between recognition and the creation of new art. The narrative enters Rome not from Dorothea's perspective but from that of Ladislaw, the artist, so that the first sighting of Dorothea in the city is a moment of recognition for the reader, as well as for Ladislaw. Moving through the Vatican, 'towards the hall where the reclining Ariadne, then called the Cleopatra, lies in the marble voluptuousness of her beauty,' Ladislaw sees 'another figure standing against a pedestal near the reclining marble: a breathing blooming girl, whose form, not shamed by the Ariadne, was clad in Quakerish gray drapery' (*Middlemarch*, 189). The juxtaposition between the artwork and Dorothea creates a doubling of the recognition effect; she is recognized as like a living version of the statue, and she is recognized as the wife of Ladislaw's cousin. Naumann, Ladislaw's German friend, expresses the desire to close the circle of energy suggested by Dorothea and the statue; he wants to convert her back into art: 'There lies antique beauty, not corpse-like even in death, but arrested in the complete contentment of its sensuous perfection: and here stands beauty in its breathing life, with the consciousness of Christian centuries in its bosom' (189). In *Roderick Hudson*, this same process is portrayed, although the recognition is recast as psychological rather than literal. The sculptor Gloriani recognises in the character of Christina Light, the first time he sees her in Rome, not the woman herself but a realization of his own imagined figure:

I've been carrying about in my head for years an idea for a creature as fine as a flower-stem and yet as full as a flame, but it has always stayed there for want of a tolerable model. I've seen my notion in bits, but in her I see it whole. As soon as I looked at her I said to myself, 'By Jove, there's my idea in the flesh!' (*Roderick*, 190)

Rome is a place wherein artists recognise their creations, and where they can use that recognition as a creative force that translates the energy of the recognized object into art.

In turn, these recognized ideas travelled between artists in the city and were recycled in further artworks, creating circles within circles of repetition. The density of artists in Rome from the mid century onwards allowed ideas and stories to travel between even disparate artists, such as in the case of Elizabeth Gaskell, whose anecdote, which she termed the 'story of the lady haunted by the face' and which she told to the Storys in Rome in the spring of 1857, made its way into Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun* three years later, though Gaskell and Hawthorne themselves never met.<sup>17</sup> Gaskell found Rome to be a particularly powerful site for both oral story-telling, and ghost stories: in a letter to Emelyn Story, she explains a period of writer's block after returning to England with the excuse that 'I could *tell* the stories quite easily. How I should like to do it to you and Mr Story and Edith, sitting over a wood-fire and knowing that the Vatican was in sight of the windows behind!' <sup>18</sup> The story of the face was thus a product of Rome's facility to enable the oral telling of stories in Gaskell's experience: this was a practice that resembled the fluid movement of artistic energy in the city explored in the previous chapter, and which was particularly appropriate for the narration of stories about ghosts, which, as will be explored in chapter three, were likewise a vehicle for exploring the movement of energy in Rome.<sup>19</sup> The tale Gaskell told is itself a story of Roman repetition that proceeded to reverberate, recycled and reiterated, throughout the expatriate community in the city. Gaskell's oral story behaved like the images and texts repeated and dispersed within

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<sup>17</sup> Gaskell, *Letters*, p. 172.

<sup>18</sup> James, *William Wetmore Story*, Vol. 1, pp. 358-9.

<sup>19</sup> Jenny Uglow's *Elizabeth Gaskell: A Habit of Stories* describes how oral story-telling was a key feature of Gaskell's Roman experience with the Story household: 'The talking was all. Often they sat in a circle and told stories, especially of mysteries and ghosts' p. 423.

print culture; it is thus an example of the difference between ‘oral culture that coexists with print’ and the ‘oral culture that does not’ identified by Barbara J. Little.<sup>20</sup> Gaskell’s story was repeated not only in Hawthorne’s novel but also in his *Notebooks*, in Augustus Hare’s *The Story of my Life* (1896), and earlier, following a previous telling, by Charles Dickens in his short story, ‘To Be Read at Dusk’ (1852).

Nathaniel Hawthorne reported hearing the ‘marvellous tale, on the authority of Mrs. Gaskell’ from Emelyn Story in 1858, and sketched its plot out in his *Notebooks*.

A lady, recently married, was observed to be in a melancholy frame of mind, and fell into a bad state of health. She told her husband that she was haunted with the constant vision of a certain face, which affected her with indescribable horror, and was the cause of her melancholy and illness. The physicians prescribed travel, and they went first to Paris, where the lady’s spirits grew somewhat better, and the vision haunted her less constantly. They purposed going to Italy; and before their departure from Paris, a letter of introduction was given them by a friend, directed to a person in Rome. On their arrival in Rome, the letter was delivered; the person called; and in his face the lady recognized the precise reality of her vision. [...] The end of the story is, that the husband was almost immediately recalled to England by an urgent summons; the wife disappeared, that very night, and was recognized driving out of Rome, in a carriage, in tears, and accompanied by the visionary unknown. It is a very foolish story, but told as truth. (358)

Just as the sculptor Gloriani sees in Christina Light the realization of his imagined statue, so here does the new bride encounter a manifestation of a dreamed face in Rome. In every iteration of this story, the essential elements remain the same: a bride, troubled by dreams of a male face, encounters the embodiment of her vision in Italy before disappearing with him in Rome. At its sparest, most basic level, this is a story of Roman recognition: in the ‘city of visible history’, both the abstract past and the abstract dream are repeated, materialized (*Eliot*, 192).

The search for a sense of Gaskell’s original story leans primarily on the version given by Hare as a fully fleshed-out account that has some claims to authenticity. Of the various iterations of the narrative, Hare’s is the only version

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<sup>20</sup> Barbara J. Little, ‘Explicit and Implicit Meanings in Material Culture and Print Culture’, *Historical Archaeology* 26, no. 3 (1992): pp. 85-94 (p. 85).

published with the explicit purpose of recording Gaskell's tale, and the only one recorded within a work of memoir as opposed to fiction apart from Hawthorne's sketch in his *Italian Notebook*. Hare's account can by no means be considered an accurate retelling; its embellishments contradict each other: the tale is one Gaskell heard in her childhood narrating events from 'many years before,' which would suggest it is set at the turn of the nineteenth century at the latest, but by the time the newlywed couple arrive in Rome, 'It was the spring of 1848—the years of the Louis Philippe revolution.'<sup>21</sup> The story is told in detail so elaborate that it is highly improbable that it was passed all the way from Gaskell to Mrs Hibbert to Hare and on to his readers. However, the essential details are all corroborated by Hawthorne in his notebook. The shape of the narrative and its representation of the female character's reaction to the repetition of her dreamed face in Rome do seem convincing as Gaskell's own: they suggest the same relationship between a vulnerable female protagonist and her sexuality as that portrayed in Gaskell's *Ruth* (1853), in which Ruth 'dreamed of Mr. Bellingham', only to become his mistress and mother of his illegitimate child.<sup>22</sup>

In Hare's account, the newlywed Mrs Alcock, who is 'very young, indeed' is 'radiantly, perfectly happy' until she begins to suffer from 'a case of what is known as phantasmagoria' in which 'waking or sleeping, she seemed to see before her a face, the face of a man whom she exactly described, and that she was sure that some dreadful misfortune was about to befall her from the owner of that face'. Doctors attribute the problem to her status as a new bride, suggesting somewhat euphemistically that her 'unmarried state' of 'indulgence and consideration' had prepared her poorly for 'the ordinary rubs of practical life' (307-8). The couple travel to Italy in the hope this will cure Mrs Alcock's illness, but as soon as they arrive in Rome, she encounters the embodiment of the face from her dreams. By the end of the tale, the man is witnessed in a carriage leaving Rome with Mrs Alcock 'crying and wringing her hands as if her heart would break' (311). This portrait of Mrs Alcock suggests a woman who, once introduced to the realities of a sexual marital relationship, becomes acutely and agonizingly aware of her vulnerability to sexual

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<sup>21</sup> Augustus Hare, *The Story of My Life* (London: George Allen, 1896), p. 307; p. 310. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>22</sup> Elizabeth Gaskell, *Ruth* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1855) p. 13.

predation from men. Once in Rome, her premonition immediately becomes a reality, the sarcophagus on the street outside a grim symbol both of Mrs Alcock's future and the ever-present past. Eventually, her fears of sexual victimization are realized and she is carried away apparently against her will.

Hare's account of Gaskell's story of the face is a tale about the manifestations of fear enabled by a setting in which the historic Roman energy of the past is visible, tangible and constant. The extended description of the square precedes the first encounter with the face and sets up a site in which history and the past are unchanging and manifested, and the flow of energy between past and present is continuous.

One of the oldest established hotels in Rome is the Hotel d'Angleterre in the Bocca di Leone. It was to it that travellers generally went first when they arrived at Rome in the old vetturino days; and there, by the fountain near the hotel door which plays into a sarcophagus under the shadow of two old pepper-trees, idle contadini used to collect in old days to see the foreigners arrive. So I remember it in the happy old days[...]. (309)

This passage returns over and over to the word 'old': the 'oldest' hotel, the 'old' days and 'old' trees. Like the sarcophagi that Hawthorne considered could be repurposed as 'wine-coolers in a modern dining-room', the sarcophagus in the Bocca di Leone is deployed for a new, and symbolic purpose. The fountain playing into it establishes a sense of continuous flow between present and past, water circulating in and out of the ancient object. The juxtaposition of the water—moving, energetic—with a stone receptacle for a dead body pre-empts the uncanny, disruptive moment of recognition to come. There is the idea here, too, of burial: the sarcophagus is 'under the shadow', implying the possibility, or inevitability, that like a buried antiquity, its significance will come to light. It is beside this sarcophagus, in a 'group under the pepper-trees' that Mrs Alcock first sees the man of whom she has dreamed. Like the sarcophagus, the man is 'under' the trees, and like the sarcophagus, his existence is a miracle performed by the city: a manifestation of abstract energy; a dream; the past.

These concerns regarding abstraction and manifestation in Rome were maintained by Dickens in his version. 'To Be Read at Dusk' offers a more expansive portrait of the way energy in Italy, and particularly in Rome, travels between past and present, and between dream and reality. In Dickens' hands the story speaks more

forcefully and more perversely about the power and sexual dynamics of the movement of energy.

When the story first appeared in the 1852 edition of *The Keepsake*, Gaskell complained to Eliza Fox: ‘How are the Dickens [sic]? Wretch that he is to go and write MY story of the lady haunted by the face; I shall have nothing to talk about now at dull parties’ (Chapple, 172). She also accused Dickens directly in a letter now lost; from his sardonic response we understand that she had told the story to him in person; unlike Augustus Hare’s, therefore, Dickens’ version of the story of the face is ostensibly second, rather than third, hand. Nonetheless, ‘To Be Read at Dusk’ is both a Dickensian reading and a Dickensian writing of the Gaskell original rather than an attempt to give a true account of it.

When Dickens wrote to Gaskell to justify his cooptation of the story, he based his defense on the idea of ghost stories as public property. ‘Ghost-stories,’ he argued, ‘illustrating particular states of mind and processes of the imagination, are common-property, I always think—except in the manner of relating them, and O who can rob some people of that!’<sup>23</sup> In Dickens’ formulation orally-told ghost stories behave in the same way as Rome’s artistic energy: they are ubiquitous, to be harnessed and shaped by the artists upon whom the stories ‘impress’ themselves. His argument echoes that of Ralph Waldo Emerson who argued that ‘poetry was all written before time was, and whenever we are so finely organized that we can penetrate into that region where the air is music, we hear those primal warblings, and attempt to write them down [...] Words and deeds are quite indifferent modes of the divine energy. Words are also actions, and actions are a kind of words.’<sup>24</sup> Emerson’s idea of the ‘finely organized’ poet who can access ‘divine energy’, like Hawthorne’s ‘receptive imagination [that] took an impress’ of Roman energy, enables Dickens to argue that he and Gaskell are simply making use of the same source for their stories—the artistic energy of the orally-told ghost story—which neither can claim as their own. Marilyn Strathern describes the notion of ‘ownership’ as one that ‘*re-embeds ideas and products in an*

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<sup>23</sup> Charles Dickens to Elizabeth Gaskell, 25 November 1851, in *The Pilgrim Edition of the Letters of Charles Dickens*, Vol. 6, ed. by Graham Storey, Kathleen Tillotson and Nina Burgis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988) p. 546.

<sup>24</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, ‘The Poet’ (1844) in *Selected Essays* (New York: Penguin, 1985), pp. 259-284 (pp. 262-263).



*organism* (whether a corporation, culture or individual author)' and 'gathers things momentarily to a point by locating them in the owner, halting endless dissemination' [original emphasis].<sup>25</sup> Dickens rejects Gaskell's attempt to 'gather' Roman energy in the form of the ghost story to an 'individual author' and instead insists upon the free-flowing movement of the story that produces 'endless dissemination.'

Despite Dickens' insistence on his right to repeat Gaskell's story of the face, 'To Be Read at Dusk' is preoccupied with ideas of ownership and authority that echo his broader engagement with international copyright and the importance of retaining authorial control of his own work. In 1842, ten years before the publication of 'To Be Read at Dusk', Dickens had first launched his campaign for international copyright in Connecticut while on his first reading tour of the United States. He wrote to Forster that, 'The raven hasn't more joy in eating a stolen piece of meat, than the American has in reading the English book which he gets for nothing.'<sup>26</sup> This injustice provoked a profound outrage in Dickens, which Meredith L. McGill claims was nonetheless 'no match for the clash of political principles, cultural values, and economic interests that converged around the issue of international copyright.'<sup>27</sup> Though Dickens' resolutely maintains the word 'international' in his arguments around copyright, his preoccupation was demonstrably more narrow: it was transatlantic copyright that most keenly occupied his concern, and more specifically still, he wanted to ensure the copyright of English literature in the United States. In *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843), Dickens satirizes the New York social scene for its lack of integrity: 'There seemed to be no man there without a title: for those who had not attained to military honours were either doctors, professors, or reverends.'<sup>28</sup> The United States was a country, for Dickens, of surfaces and inauthenticity. In this sense, it was the opposite of Italy, which represented for Americans and Europeans alike the integrity of history, and which displayed its heritage so openly in the form of ruins. Italy was a country of overt and authentic repetition—of history and of art—which not only excused the

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<sup>25</sup> Marilyn Strathern, *Property, Substance and Effect: Anthropological Essays on Persons and Things* (London: Athlone Press, 1999), p. 177.

<sup>26</sup> Dickens, quoted in John Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1872), Vol. 1, p. 409.

<sup>27</sup> Meredith McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting, 1834-1853* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), p. 78.

<sup>28</sup> Charles Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 234.

artist's repetitions, but made them in some ways inevitable by the sheer density and mass of the country's artistic heritage and energy. Just as 'ghost stories' in Dickens' argument to Gaskell, were 'common property', Rome, a ghost story itself with its manifested history, and the artistic energy flowing around it, were likewise freely usable in artistic repetitions.

It is notable therefore that though Dickens does change the location of the story in 'To Be Read at Dusk' from Rome to Genoa, he chooses to keep the Italian setting. Dickens was more familiar with Genoa than Rome since his experience of Italy was concentrated there during his stay in 1845, and the Genoese Palazzo inhabited by the protagonists of 'To Be Read at Dusk' is identified by Ruth Glancy as the Villa Doria, 'recommended by Emile de la Rue as the ideal place for the Dickens family to stay';<sup>29</sup> the decision to stay elsewhere was one Dickens regretted (Hollington, 79). While the significance of the de la Rue family will be discussed below, it is significant to note that, having made the decision to move the bulk of the story's action away from Rome, which therefore gave him the option to use any location at all, Dickens nonetheless maintained the Italian location. This decision indicates the link not only between Italy and the story's preoccupation with repetition, but also between Italy and the nature of the story's transmission. Genoa's status as a port city throws the focus of the beginning of the story on the notion of the liminal: it offers a way into the Italian narrative that places emphasis on the idea of boundary-crossing, between nations, between dream and reality. It was permissible to repeat an Italian story, because Italy is itself a country of repetition, of circulating 'un-embedded' energy, whereas an American repetition of an English work was a distortion of its nature.

This idea is underscored in the form of Dickens' story itself. The story of the face is presented in a frame within a frame, so that it reaches the reader from a distance that pre-empts attacks relating to the ownership of the story whilst simultaneously drawing attention to its status as a repeated narrative. The narrator is an eavesdropper, reporting a conversation he overhears between five couriers sitting outside a Swiss convent. One of these couriers then recounts a story about an English couple he once worked for. The narrative is couched in terms of eavesdropping, telling & retelling;

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<sup>29</sup> Ruth Glancy, 'To Be Read at Dusk', *The Dickensian*, Vol. 83.1 (1987), 40-47 (p. 41). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

the narrator, like its author, makes no claim to originality and in fact expends considerable energy denying his own authority. Kimberley Jackson identifies in Dickens' treatment of the story a focus on the practice of telling stories and their ownership: 'While all of these layers of narration would be enough to call attention to the act of storytelling itself, there is an additional level of self-reflexivity in the content', which is 'concerned with figuration and representation'.<sup>30</sup> The form the story of the face takes within 'To Be Read at Dusk', like the nature of its transmission from Gaskell to Dickens, echoes its concerns, which explore the disconcerting circular repetitions of Rome: the past repeated in the future, the dream repeated in reality. The overheard, anecdotal nature of the telling of the story serves to sharpen its focus on the idea of these repetitions.

Jackson draws attention to the story's opening, when the narrator describes the circumstances of his eavesdropping with a striking disavowal of ownership of his own narration: after observing the couriers regarding the surrounding scenery, 'stained by the setting sun as if a mighty quantity of red wine had been broached upon the mountain top, and had not yet had time to sink into the snow', he qualifies: 'This is not my simile.'<sup>31</sup> Jackson observes that, '[t]his is the only sentence up to this point in the narrative spoken in the present tense. It is as if another voice comes in here, one not part of the scene, to disclaim ownership of the simile, [...] to disavow the likeness' (23). The story's structure again belies preoccupation with authority, and the fine line the author must tread between plagiarism and the inevitable repetitions of old and prestigious artistic cultures.

In this version, when the newlywed couple arrive in Genoa, they are visited by the owner of the face, Signor Dellombra. As in Hare's telling, the wife, here named Clara, responds initially with horror; however, after repeated interactions with the guest, Clara's abject fear becomes complicated by attraction. She 'would look at him with a terrified and fascinated glance, as if his presence had some evil influence or power upon her' (313). Furthermore, this fascination is mutual: the courier observes

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<sup>30</sup> Kimberly Jackson, 'Dangerous Similitude in Charles Dickens' "To Be Read at Dusk"', *Journal of the Short Story in English*, 52 (2009), 21-30 (p. 21). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>31</sup> Dickens, 'To Be Read at Dusk,' in *Reprinted Pieces: The Lamplighter, To Be Read at Dusk and Sunday Under Three Heads* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1870), pp. 305-318 (p. 305). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

Dellombra, ‘in the shaded gardens, or the large half-lighted sala, looking, as I might say, “fixedly upon her out of darkness”’ (313). This is a story not only in which a dreamer meets her dream, but one in which the dream meets his dreamer: Dellombra’s attraction to Clara figures as a secondary form of recognition. Dickens, having already amplified the original tale’s concern with repetition by use of the multi-layered framing device, further heightens its significance by mirroring Clara’s recognition of Dellombra with his of her. The symbolic pairing of their names—light and shadow—links them as mutually dependent, unable to exist without the other. Jackson contends that ‘the shadow represents her [Clara’s] own dark side, one whose power over her is overwhelming’ (14). Just as artists in Italy described the experience of inspiration as a passive one in which ideas came to them, so here does Clara’s ‘idea’ come to her and claim her. She is his subject as much as he is hers.

This relationship between Clara and Dellombra raises questions about the nature of the phenomenon that Dickens’ sought to explore in the story. While ‘To Be Read at Dusk’ takes pains to establish its claims to authenticity within a tradition of oral ghost-story-telling, it also calls into question the ghostliness of the ghost stories being told. Though Dickens’ defense of his use of Gaskell’s original story is based on the commonality of the ghost story genre, his own version rejects the label for itself. The first line of dialogue overheard and reported by the narrator is a fragment: ‘If you talk of ghosts—’ one courier begins. He is interrupted: ‘“But I *don’t* talk of ghosts,” said the German. ‘Of what then?’ asked the Swiss’ (306). It is apparent from both the story itself and the wording of his justification to Gaskell that Dickens’ interest in the story in fact lies far from ghosts. In his letter he writes, ‘I hope I have not damaged the incident of the Face? It came into my mind (you remember that it struck me very much when you told it) as a very remarkable instance of a class of mental phenomena’.<sup>32</sup> Dickens’ interest in ‘mental phenomena’—in presenting the events of the story in terms of psychology rather than fantasy—is the reason behind the story’s most notable differences from what is known of the Gaskell original. The story makes use of the uncanny, Gothic and supernatural elements of Gaskell’s tale, but co-opts them to dramatise a different kind of ‘phenomenon’. Louise Henson notes that ‘John

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<sup>32</sup> Charles Dickens to Elizabeth Gaskell, 25 November 1851, in *The Pilgrim Edition of the Letters of Charles Dickens*, p. 546.

Forster recalled that Dickens ‘had something of a hankering’ after ghosts, and ‘such was his interest generally in things supernatural that, but for the strong restraining power of his common sense, he might have fallen into the follies of Spiritualism.’<sup>33</sup> The preoccupation of ‘To Be Read at Dusk’ arises from the tension between Dickens’ ‘hankering’ and his ‘common sense’: the story indulges in mystery and exploits the suggestiveness of apparently supernatural events, all the while insisting, ‘There are no ghosts *here!*’ (315). Instead, the narrative offers a psychological and more overtly sexual explanation for what in Gaskell’s rendition as recorded by Hare remains mysterious: the movement of artistic energy in Rome.

‘To Be Read at Dusk’, then, is not a ghost story but an exploration of the power and psychology of sexuality and attraction in the context of the expatriate encounter with artistic energy in Italy, and specifically, in Rome: ‘a very remarkable instance of a class of mental phenomena’. Both Ruth Glancy and Louise Henson relate this to Dickens’ interest in animal magnetism and in particular his experience of mesmerically ‘treating’ Madame de la Rue, wife of Emile, in Genoa in 1845. This was, according to Steven Connor,

Dickens’s most sustained period of involvement with mesmerism. [...] Madame De La Rue had suffered for some years from one of those generalised and unnameable clusters of symptoms on which mesmerism was so often brought to bear – in her case, headaches, insomnia, tics, convulsions. (6)

Henson describes how Dickens’ experiences made a deep impression upon him and coloured his subsequent attitude to ghosts. In magnetic sleep, Mme de la Rue described spectral figures, and the presence of a man, ‘whom she is afraid of, and “dare not” look at’ (Henson, 47). To Emile de la Rue, Dickens wrote that the animal magnetism he saw at work in Madame de la Rue’s case was ‘a philosophical explanation of many Ghost Stories. Though it is hardly less chilling than a Ghost-Story itself.’<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Louise Henson, ‘Investigations and Fictions: Charles Dickens and Ghosts’ in *The Victorian Supernatural*, ed. by Nicola Bown and Carolyn Burdett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 44. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>34</sup> Dickens, quoted in Henson, p. 51.

Ruth Glancy argues that Dickens' interest in Madame de la Rue's case was not merely scientific and that mesmerism in general had a 'strong sexual foundation: most mesmerists were men; most patients, young women.' These dynamics of mesmerism operate in 'To Be Read at Dusk', both between Clara and her naïve husband who seeks to control her anxiety ('She was beautiful. He was happy' (314)) and between Clara and Dellombra, who has access to her subconscious and wields silent dominance. Dellombra is both the malady and doctor, controlling his patient by 'looking at her fixedly,' which, Glancy notes, mimics the mesmerist's heavy reliance on eye contact (43). Stephen Connor explores the dynamics of the mesmeric relationship:

[I]n offering healing, the mesmeric operator (spiritual or medical) will always be deploying the fantasy of a power (and, of course, the power of a fantasy) which he (nearly always he) merely refracts, reflects or conducts. He may suggest himself as the mere prompt or occasion for an access of sensibility in the mesmeric subject. (16)

Just as in Rome excavated ruins become ruinous and Roman objects become subjects that energetically overwhelm and exhaust the visitors who come to see them, the relationship between the 'mesmeric operator' and his patient is one of inverted and complicated power relations that play out sexually. This power, furthermore, is figured as a form of energy which the mesmerist, like the artist, seeks to 'conduct'.

Though critical focus on the relationship between Dickens' mesmeric experiences and the action of the story has tended to lead to a dismissal of the significance of the Gaskell connection, the application of the influence of mesmerism to the structure of the original story is key to its mutation into a more fully-formed sexual scenario that in turn informs a representation of Rome as a city of manifested abstraction and desire. Roman energy, in other words, can be explored in ghost stories that use the metaphor or the perceived reality of the ghost to demonstrate the movement of artistic energy between things and across time, and also through the dynamics of mesmerism. In each iteration, the preoccupation of the 'story of the face' is with the ability of the expatriate to encounter manifestations of Roman energy, and the struggle to 'conduct' or to control it.

In the story's denouement, Dickens moves the action to Rome in order to use the setting of the Roman carnival to serve the same purpose for which Hare employs

the fountain and objects of ancient Rome: to indicate the cycling of energy through past and present Rome already suggested by the empowered Dellombra's mutually-fascinated mesmeric relationship with Clara. Dickens' carnival is a series of subversions and inversions; it is the 'world inside out' and 'temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; [...] the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions,'<sup>35</sup> that Bakhtin identifies as key traits of the event (10). It is in this context that Clara is found to be missing, the first in a chain of displacements and disruptions that include 'little Carolina, who never stirred from home alone, running distractedly along the Corso', and the abandoned husband becoming transformed, 'no more the master that I knew, than I was he' (314-5). Just as in Hare's version the irrepressible presence of historic Roman energy is used to suggest the collapsed boundaries between the abstract and the material, the coincidence of Clara's flight and the Roman carnival indicates that ordered distinctions—the separation between dream and reality, past and present, artist and idea—have also become compromised in Rome.

The relationship between dream, repetition and the artist's subject is explicitly drawn in 'To Be Read at Dusk'. When the newlywed couple arrives in Italy, the servant reports Clara's 'great fear of meeting with the likeness of that face' amongst the paintings in their Genoese palazzo. '[W]e looked round at all the pictures':

The Madonna and Bambino, San Francisco, San Sebastiano, [...] Forests, Apostles, Doges, all my old acquaintances many times repeated? — yes. Dark, handsome man in black, reserved and secret, with black hair and grey moustache, looking fixedly at mistress out of darkness? — no. (311)

Not only does Clara anticipate the manifestation of her dream in Italy; she explicitly supposes that it will be an artistic manifestation. She is, in this sense, imagining a reverse of Gloriani's scenario in *Roderick Hudson*, in which the sculptor conceives of a statue and then encounters a living woman. Clara dreams of a face, and expects therefore to encounter it in an Italian painting. Dickens draws Gaskell's story more

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<sup>35</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 11. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

closely towards the specific artistic element of Italy's repetitions. Not only does Italy manifest the energy of the past, it manifests it in art.

Hawthorne's retelling of this tale in *The Marble Faun* draws this relationship further still, recasting the recognition of the face within the specific relationship of artist and model. Julian Hawthorne makes the connection, in *Hawthorne and His Circle* between the story 'told [to Hawthorne] by Mrs. Story when we were living in Rome for the second time' and a scene in the novel: 'The incident of the woman's face at the carriage window reappears in *The Marble Faun*' (349). This is a reference to the incident towards the end of the novel when Kenyon wanders through Rome alone, searching for Hilda.

[A] carriage passed him. It was driven rapidly, but not too fast for the light of a gas-lamp to flare upon a face within; especially as it was bent forward, appearing to recognize him, while a beckoning hand was protruded from the window. On his part, Kenyon at once knew the face, and hastened to the carriage. (307)

After exchanging a few opaque lines of dialogue, Kenyon begins to mistrust his recognition, experiencing, 'a dreamy uncertainty whether it was really herself to whom he spoke' (307). It is only at the end of the encounter that Kenyon becomes aware 'that there was someone beside her in the carriage, hitherto concealed by her attitude; a man, it appeared, with a sallow Italian face, which the sculptor distinguished but imperfectly, and did not recognise' (307). Serving almost no plot function, the purpose of this encounter is a thematic, rather than dramatic, exploration of Gaskell's story of the face. The incident is described not as a reunion between old friends, but between Kenyon and a peculiar manifestation of a being from his imagination and memory. His 'dreamy uncertainty' about her identity momentarily clouds his 'sculptor's accuracy of perception', which determines that it was in fact 'Miriam's identical face', drawing an implicit link between dream and the face before him (307).

Though this encounter uses the construct of the manifestation of remembered or imagined faces and therefore recycles Gaskell's original tale, as Julian Hawthorne suggests, the concerns and form of the original story of the face are in fact far more closely reflected in the relationship between Miriam and her Model. Anne Henry Ehrenpreis finds that 'the whole of Mrs. Gaskell's little story contributed to



Hawthorne's conception of Miriam'.<sup>36</sup> The influence of Gaskell's story, in Ehrenpreis's words, 'may have stayed in Hawthorne's mind and made its tiny contribution to his conception' of Miriam's narrative (111). In fact, *The Marble Faun* repeats the story of the face far more boldly, drawing on its narrative of repeated energy to illuminate the relationship between Roman artists and their subjects.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the emergence of the Model from the catacombs is presented as dramatized prosopopoeia. The Model is a manifestation of the Roman energy that is uncannily both familiar and strange. He has an intense and reciprocal psychological relationship with Miriam: 'your heart trembled with horror when you recognized me [...] but you did not guess that there was an equal horror in my own!' (74). Like Dickens' shadowy Dellombra, the Model is, in his own words, 'nothing but a shadow', who, in the course of the narrative, materializes. Hawthorne's treatment of the Model follows the pattern of embodiment established by Gaskell, and later Dickens, in their stories of the face (*Marble Faun*, 26). The relationship between the narratives is underscored by the Model's demand that Miriam, like newlywed brides of the earlier stories, must 'vanish out of the scene: quit Rome with me, and leave no trace whereby to follow you. It is in my power, as you well know, to compel your acquiescence in my bidding' (73).

Unlike in the Gaskell/Hare/Dickens tellings of the story, however, Hawthorne pursues the circle of Roman energy further still: not only does he transform the Model into art—a face that 'left his features, or some shadow or reminiscence of them, in many of her sketches and pictures;' he indicates that the Model has *come from* art as well. When Miriam, Hilda, Donatello and Kenyon discover what they believe to be an 'original sketch' by Guido for his 'Archangel Michael' they experience Roman recognition when studying the Archangel's face: 'I know the face well!' Donatello cries. 'It is Miriam's model!' (109). This moment is reminiscent of the encounter described in an 1850 short story by Dickens in *Household Words*, in which art-appreciating narrator meets a 'terrible Being' on a steamboat. The 'being' replies, when asked what he is, first, '[a] Model', and then, 'the Ghost of Art!'<sup>37</sup> Like Miriam

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<sup>36</sup> Anne Henry Ehrenpreis, 'Gaskell and Hawthorne', *The Nathaniel Hawthorne Journal*, 1973, pp. 89-119 (p. 110). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>37</sup> Charles Dickens, 'The Ghost of Art', *Household Words*, 1:17 (July 20, 1850), p. 386.

and Donatello, the narrator of the story feels the urge ‘to grapple with this man, or demon, and plunge him over the side’: he is ‘a ghostly medium’ who both *is* and *mediates* artistic energy. Dickens’ example demonstrates the uncanny fluidity with which energy moves through artworks and across time. Dickens returns to the image in *Pictures from Italy* in a description of Roman recognition on the Spanish steps: ‘I could not conceive why the faces seemed familiar to me; why they appeared to have beset me, for years [...] I soon found that we had made acquaintance, and improved it, for several years, on the walls of various Exhibition Galleries’ (174). The Roman energy of the Model is thus shown to cycle through various forms and stages: from artwork, to abstraction, to body, to artwork. While Leland S. Person reads Donatello’s murder of the Model as ‘a morbid reversal of [the] creative process—the disintegration of a male body into a mass of “heap” of raw material’,<sup>38</sup> the ‘disintegration’ of the Model is in fact only one stage in his perpetual cycling through the city: the Model’s energy is immortal. By surviving the entropic ‘disintegration’ of bodily death, and reappearing subsequently in new forms, the Model represents the expatriate artist’s fantasy of perfect recycling. The Model’s face appears and reappears in Roman art across time, following the cyclical pattern of Roman energy. Hawthorne takes the format of this encounter and places it across time: the recognition encountered is not only uncanny, it is physically impossible and thus underscores the Model’s role in the narrative as a manifestation of Roman energy rather than a living being. The Model, like the story of the face itself, is a fully realized example of the circular pattern of recycling Roman energy that does not die.

Furthermore, as it does for the Model, *The Marble Faun* presents an origin story for the story of the face, describing the way the narrative of the encounter in the catacombs travelled around the expatriate network in Rome:

The story of this adventure spread abroad, and made its way beyond the usual gossip of the Forestieri, even into Italian circles, where, enhanced by a still potent spirit of superstition, it grew far more wonderful than as above recounted. [...] For, nobody has any conscience about adding to the improbabilities of a marvellous tale. (27)

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<sup>38</sup> Leland S. Person, ‘Falling Into Heterosexuality: Sculpting Male Bodies in *The Marble Faun* and *Roderick Hudson*,’ in *Roman Holidays*, p. 111.

Like Dickens' multiple framing devices employed in 'To Be Read at Dusk,' this is a moment both of self-consciousness and disingenuousness. Hawthorne acknowledges the journey of the story through the network, but suggests that it has occurred in reverse. Rather than originating as a fairy tale or ghost story and evolving into the uncanny gothic version of his own narrative, he proposes that from his own version, a fairy tale was spawned. By reversing the ordering of the journey of the story, he again suggests a circularity to the pattern of its movement, traversing between cultures and genres in the city in either or both directions, continuously repeating itself.

## II. UNEASY RECYCLING AND AURA

### **'Thousands of Venuses, but no Women': The Paradox of the New in Neoclassical Sculpture**

The repetitions and reiterations that informed and propelled Gaskell's story of the face through its various forms were matters of concern, not only for the writers who were embroiled in complex debates regarding the boundaries between inspiration, influence, plagiarism and theft of copyright, but also for sculptors. The project of neoclassical sculpture was self-consciously and anxiously one that relied on the recycling of Roman energy. James' Roderick Hudson loudly espouses the ideal neoclassicist project as one that looks backwards: 'I never mean to make anything ugly. The Greeks never made anything ugly, and I'm a Hellenist' (115). In pursuing this goal, Hudson was not only proposing to copy 'the Greeks' but also the Romans who copied the Greeks: as Story's Mallet complains, 'we have only Roman copies of the great Greek works. Nay, we do not know with certainty that even these are copies, or if so, of what they are copies' (*Conversations*, 356). The practice of copying the copying of Greek work is presented by Hudson as an act of preservation:

I care only for beauty of Type—there it is, if you want to know. [...] It's against the taste of the day, I know; we've really lost the faculty to understand beauty in the large ideal way. We stand like a race with shrunk muscles, staring helplessly at the weights our forefathers easily lifted. But I don't hesitate to proclaim it—I mean to lift them again! [...] The thing that there was is the thing I want to bring back. (*Roderick Hudson*, 116-7)

Roderick Hudson's neoclassicist project works to counter a perceived entropic degradation in the values art and 'beauty', returning them to the glorious weight 'easily lifted' by 'those Italian fellows in the Renaissance' (116). It is self-consciously described as a process not only of reversal, but resurrection of 'the thing that there was'. Michael Bright links this process to the necessity for 'receptive imagination' in the revivalist project: 'How does the poet succeed in saturating his work with the antique spirit? The answer is that he himself must first be steeped with the spirit he means to convey.'<sup>39</sup>

This idea was shared so widely in the expatriate community in Rome that the idea that a new artwork could be mistaken for an antique was considered a great accolade. Harriet Hosmer reports with pride the praise she received for her *Sleeping Faun*: 'Sir Charles Eastlake said, "If it had been discovered among the ruins of Rome or Pompeii it would have been pronounced one of the best Grecian statues," and John Gibson said, "It is worthy to be an Antique"' (Carr, 209-10). This prioritization of work that appeared 'authentic' amongst art critics and particularly art buyers, meant that a *Venus* made by William Wetmore Story intended as a practical joke nonetheless had significant financial value. He explained in a letter to Charles Norton that his *Venus* was intended to deceive his friend Charles T. Newton, 'the English consul and archaeologist [...] who has really studied Greek art, having devoted himself to it for years.'

I took it into my head to endeavor to cheat him and model a small Venus after the style of the Antique – with the intention of casting it and then knocking off the head and arm and legs and imposing it on him as an Antique – from a Greek figure. I kept the whole matter a secret until I had nearly finished it when suddenly one day [...] he burst in and saw it – to my great disappointment. But not to throw away my work I finished it – and he liked it – so much so that he persuaded me to have it cut in marble.

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<sup>39</sup> Michael Bright, 'Metaphors of Revivalism', *Victorian Poetry*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Autumn, 1986), pp. 245-260 (p. 247). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

Story's deliberate imitation, more a forgery than a Roderick Hudson-esque Ideal tribute, is nonetheless attributed value by the man Story described as 'the only capable critic I know on sculpture'.<sup>40</sup> Story went on to sell three copies of the *Venus* between 1861 and 1864.<sup>41</sup> A document entitled 'Wise Saws and Modern Instances', in which Story noted down comments made by ill-informed and ignorant visitors to his studio, includes a tacit acknowledgement of the irony of the *Venus*'s success by recording the comment of a 'Yankee' visitor: 'Now that statue of Venus of yours is what I call a neat thing.'<sup>42</sup>

Jan Seidler observes that not only was creation of the statue an act of imitation, but so too was the hoax: 'Michelangelo, among other artists, had perpetrated the same trick centuries before when he mutilated and buried one of his statues with the aim of defrauding the pompous cognoscenti who would [...] inevitably declare it the work of a hitherto unknown Greek master' (357-8). The story of Story's *Venus* is tightly bound up with Rome's various repetitions; it was neoclassicist art seeking to repeat not only antique but also renaissance practices and forms.

Story himself was, nonetheless, well aware of the compromising position in which such repetitions placed the role and agency of the artist. Mallett, the sculptor of *Conversations in a Studio* whose role as Story's mouthpiece is evident from the extensive overlap between his lines in the *Conversations* and Story's own notes in his personal notebooks, warns against the tendency to 'subordinate art too much to mere imitation'. Instead, he argues that 'the true sphere of art today is to fuse into the grand forms and moulds of the Greek a deeper emotion, a more natural feeling, and a higher enthusiasm' (167-8). This 'fusion' rehabilitates Roman energy into the modern context and was therefore a form of true recycling: to re-use the 'moulds' of Greek art for new, nineteenth-century purposes.

Several years before he first moved to Rome, Story expressed far more negative opinions on sculpture's recycling tendencies and its use of 'moulds' from

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<sup>40</sup> William Story to Charles Eliot Norton, Letter, 23 September 1860, Document No. 7214, Charles Eliot Norton Papers.

<sup>41</sup> 'List of Statues and Sales by W. W. Story', Handwritten Manuscript, Undated, Box 7, Folder: Misc 1 of 2, Story Family Papers, Ransom Center.

<sup>42</sup> 'Wise Saws and Modern Instances,' Handwritten Manuscript, Undated, Box 7, Folder: Notes, Abstracts, Questions and Drawings, 1 of 2, Story Family Papers, Ransom Center.

other cultures and times. In a poem entitled 'Nature and Art', delivered at the Harvard Phi Beta Kappa Society's annual banquet in 1844, he castigated contemporary sculpture for its failures of originality. The poem is an impassioned call for American artists to remain in their homeland and create a national art independent of past traditions: 'In foreign soil that seed was never sown, / Which when transplanted can adorn our own; / Nor in Italian moulds of ages past / Shall the free spirit of our age be cast'.<sup>43</sup> The poem repeatedly singles out Italy as the site of the most grievous acts of American unoriginality. Story couches his call for American artistic independence in the language of America's past and on-going political debates:

So long as Art shall tamely creep and crouch,  
Slave of another's power, another's touch,  
Plunderer of wealth a previous age amassed,  
Copyist and follower, thieving from the Past,  
So long with draggled flight it can but creep,  
Where once its wing against the sky could sweep. (39)

The 'copyist' is associated with the two contradictory positions at opposing ends of the spectrum of power: he or she is both a 'plunderer of wealth', a phrase reminiscent of the concerns of the American Independence movement of the previous century, and a 'slave', a reference to the brewing American Abolitionist movement that would culminate, in less than two decades' time, in the Civil War.

In notes provided alongside the published version of 'Nature and Art', Story argued that of all art forms, sculpture had most profoundly failed 'to embody the spiritual idea of our age': 'While painting has thus advanced, sculpture has stood still.'

Modern sculpture is so subservient to Grecian, that the human face is generally treated as if it were of no moment in the expression of passion and character: because the Grecians so treated it. We have thousands of Venuses, but no women. Until the subjects of sculpture issue from the heart of the age, and their treatment is imbued with the feeling of the time, sculpture will never be the great art that it once was. [...] Sculpture is now almost nothing but imitation. (8)

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<sup>43</sup> William Wetmore Story, *Nature and Art: A Poem* (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1844), p. 35. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

This perceived difference between the achievements of painting and sculpture is dramatized by Hawthorne in *The Marble Faun* in a scene in which Miriam, the painter, visits the studio of Kenyon, the sculptor: ‘There is never a new group,’ Miriam argues, ‘never so much as a new attitude.’ Consequently, sculpture ‘has no longer a right to claim any place among living arts. It has wrought itself out, and come fairly to an end.’ Sculpture’s reliance on repetition and copying has brought about its demise. ‘[S]culptors are, of necessity, the greatest plagiarists in the world’ (*Marble Faun*, 97). Just as Miriam considers sculpture to have ‘come fairly to an end’, Story’s concern in his notes on ‘Nature and Art’ relates to the need for sculpture to endure. His ambitions are described in terms of restoration: he wishes it to be again ‘the great art that it once was’. This passage reads as an early draft of the theory of ‘fusion’ later espoused in *Conversations*. The ‘heart of the age’ and ‘the feeling of the time’ are versions of the ‘natural feeling’ and ‘higher enthusiasm’ he would go on to argue should be infused into ‘the grand forms and moulds of the Greek’.

Even at the time of writing ‘Nature and Art’ Story was experiencing discomfort with his subject matter: ‘I was cramped and confined’, he wrote to James Russell Lowell. ‘I was writing didactically and impersonally – I felt as if I dragged a lengthening chain behind me [...] I found myself encumbered with the dead bones of my subject.’<sup>44</sup> His argument in favour of adopting new American subjects and styles instead of ‘thieving from the past’ was itself an overly-familiar subject by the time Story turned to it, oppressing him with its ‘dead bones’. The ‘lengthening chain behind’ him indicates a sense of solidarity between Story as he wrote ‘Nature and Art’ and the ‘slave’ copyist he was criticising: even ‘Nature and Art’, he was aware, was unoriginal; he was simply parroting an opinion on American Art that had been subject of popular debate for many years. The ideas in ‘Nature and Art’ closely echoed those in Emerson’s ‘The American Scholar’ (1837), which argued, ‘We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe,’ and prioritised ‘the philosophy of the street’ over ‘the great, the remote, the romantic; what is doing in Italy or Arabia, what is

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<sup>44</sup> ‘William Story to James Russell Lowell’, Letter, 2 September 1844, Story Papers Austin, Box 2, Folder 7, Story Family Papers, Ransom Center.

Greek art'.<sup>45</sup> Like 'Nature and Art', it had been delivered as an address to Harvard's Phi Beta Kappa Society, and like 'Nature and Art' it was, despite its direct argument, a product of a nuanced anxiety regarding American self-reliance and the state of American art and scholarship: Kenneth S. Sacks argues that the tension between Emerson's passion for self-reliance and his 'anxiety and self-doubt' produced 'much of the fire of the talk'.<sup>46</sup> It is, in this context, perhaps unsurprising that four years after writing his poem, Story went to Rome to study sculpture. Fifteen years later, he contributed to the 'thousands of Venuses' with one of his own.

The reason sculpture is treated so differently to painting in 'Nature and Art' relates in part to the nature of its materials. Sculpture, as opposed to other art forms, was particularly concerned with ideas of perpetuity, continuity and its relationship to previous artworks because of the resilience of marble over time. It was a permanent art form, and this permanence meant, for artists like Story who moved to Rome to work, that they were surrounded by marble artworks from earlier times; to sculpt in marble in Rome necessitated an awareness of the place of the artwork in time. For Hawthorne the 'pure, white, undecaying substance [...] insures immortality to whatever is wrought in it'. For this reason, he argues, the sculptor's idea must be similarly enduring: there is 'a religious obligation to commit no idea to its mighty guardianship, save such as may repay the marble for its faithful care, its incorruptible fidelity, by warming it with an ethereal life' (*Notebooks*, 105). The artistic energy of work in marble must be as enduring as the material that holds it.

The need for marble was a large part of the draw that brought sculptors to Italy from America: while Rome provided education, inspiration and models for artists working in all modes, a further draw for American sculptors was the ready availability of good quality marble. This was mined from the quarries at Carrara that Dickens considered an almost inexhaustible resource—'marble enough for more ages than have passed'—as explored in the previous chapter (140). In America, by contrast, there was a limited supply of good-quality marble (Seidler, 93). Sculptors in Rome were therefore faced with the reality of their medium's durability twice over: in the

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<sup>45</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'The American Scholar', in Kenneth S. Sacks, *Understanding Emerson: "The American Scholar" and his struggle for self-reliance* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 145, p. 143.

<sup>46</sup> Kenneth S. Sacks, *Understanding Emerson*, p. 3.



nature of the material they worked with, and in the ubiquitous marble stuff of the land from which the material came.

Ruskin's 'The Political Economy of Art' (1857), makes the link between the durability of sculpture's material substance and its role as a durable art form in preserving artistic energy explicit. In answering the question of 'how to apply our genius' he argued that it should be 'to easy work, to lasting work',<sup>47</sup> and uses the example of sculpture to encapsulate this argument. He considers marble an ideal material that combines both ease and durability because it 'lasts quite as long as granite, and is much softer to work; therefore, when you get hold of a good sculptor, give him marble to carve—not granite' (*Political Economy*, 21). This is significant because the great crime of nineteenth-century art, Ruskin finds, is its failure of durability: '[T]hough you may still handle an Albert Dürer engraving, two hundred years old, fearlessly, not one-half of that time will have passed over your modern water-colours, before most of them will be reduced to mere white or brown rags' (26). It was the artist's duty to create work that was, therefore, not only as physically durable as a Dürer engraving, but also 'good enough to bear the test of time' (24).

Ruskin does, however, provide a counterargument to his own: 'if you make your art wear too well, you will soon have too much of it; you will throw your artists quite out of work. Better allow for a little wholesome evanescence—beneficent destruction: let each age provide art for itself' (*Political Economy*, 23). This case for 'beneficent destruction' neatly outlines the anxieties of the nineteenth-century sculptors in Rome. The density with which antique marble sculptures filled the city was testament to a material that '[wore] too well' to the point that visitors complained about Rome's 'excess of matter' (Eaton, 109). 'It is one question,' Ruskin argues, turning as many expatriates in Italy did to the metaphor of the farm, 'how to treat your fields so as to get a good harvest; another, whether you wish to have a good harvest, or would rather like to keep up the price of corn' (*Political Economy*, 23); it was between these two points of view that neoclassical sculptors anxiously oscillated. To sculpt in marble in nineteenth-century Rome was to engage with an apparently irreconcilable paradox: in order to create lasting art that preserved Roman artistic

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<sup>47</sup> John Ruskin, 'The Political Economy of Art: Lecture 1', *Unto this Last: & Other Essays on Art and Political Economy* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1907), pp. 1-36 (21-22). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

energy, it was necessary to make it in a resilient material; but in order to create a living, continuous art form that could grow, evolve and survive, it must be to a degree impermanent, in order to allow room for new art to access its energy and thereby replace it.

These concerns about continuity, originality and copying were exacerbated by the process of sculpting marble, which, unlike the solitary and singular work of the painter, involved the production of a series of copies, and the involvement of multiple people. Hawthorne, in *The Marble Faun*, gives an explanation of the sculptor's process: it begins with 'hastily scrawled sketches of nude figures';

Next there are a few very roughly modelled little figures in clay or plaster, exhibiting the second stage of the idea as it advances towards a marble immortality; and then is seen the exquisitely designed shape of clay [...] In the plaster-cast, from this clay model, the beauty of the statue strangely disappears, to shine forth again with pure, white radiance, in the precious marble of Carrara. (90)

The series of copies through which a sculpture is transferred before it reaches its final form complicated the idea of the finished marble version as 'the original'. In a medium already conflicted about its relationship to copying and originality, this contributed to further confusion about the relationship between the artist and the work: Hawthorne found the clay version of a sculpture 'more interesting than even the final marble, as being the intimate production of the sculptor himself, moulded throughout with his loving hands, and nearest to his imagination and heart', whereas the finished marble was already distanced from that 'imagination and heart' being itself already a replica (*Marble Faun*, 90).

An additional sense of distance was created by the system of producing multiple marble copies of the same artwork for sale. Seidler notes that the studio of Randolph Rogers 'operated like a factory geared to mass-producing statues'; Rogers' *Nydia, the Blind Girl of Pompeii* (1855) was sold fifty-eight times in its full-sized version, and many more in smaller size (Seidler, 201-2). The distancing from the 'imagination and heart' of the sculptor that occurred with each additional copy was reflected in the price, with the first marble version attracting the highest price, and subsequent copies decreasing accordingly (Seidler, 202). Henry P. Leland's satirical novel *Americans in Rome* (1863), which opens, 'Rome is the cradle of art—which

accounts for its sleeping there,’<sup>48</sup> maintains a caustic view of nineteenth-century art in the city throughout that called attention to the same phenomenon. Caper, a young American artist, encounters a city in which everything is multiplied, and everything is for sale. He reads advertisements for ‘Manafactory of Romain Seltings, Mosaïques, Cameas, Medalls, Erasofines, &c’ (Leland, 10). Later, he hears of the studio of a sculptor named Chapin: ‘They call his studio a shop, and they call his shop the Orphan Asylum, because he manufactured an Orphan Girl some years ago, and, as it sold well, he has kept on making orphans ever since’ (35). In Leland’s Rome, the mass-produced, illegitimate ‘Romain Seltings’ and the mass-produced ‘Orphan Girls’ are treated alike with derision as inauthentic. They are orphans not only in subject matter but in their disconnected and interrupted relationship to the artist.

The rapid reproduction of multiple versions of the same statue by single studios was enabled by the sculptors’ workmen, whose role it was to convert the clay version of the statue into marble. More so than any other element of the process of sculpture, the role of these workmen was the cause of extreme anxiety about originality and copying: ‘scepticism emerged towards sculpture as an art form due to its replicability and the perceived difficulty in detecting an original produced by an *artist* from a copy produced by *workmen*. This was a particularly vexed issue which itself challenged the Romantic notion of the individual genius artist.’<sup>49</sup> These concerns are voiced by Hawthorne, who, after visiting Story’s studio and viewing the stone-cutters at work, complained in his *Notebooks* that, ‘It is not quite pleasant to think that the sculptor does not really do the whole labor on his statues, but that they are all but finished to his hand by merely mechanical people’ (74). These ‘merely mechanical people’ were highly specialised craftsmen who each took on specific roles in relation to each complete statue. For example, ‘Hiram Powers’ studio notes record the employment of “two master carvers,” a “special carver,” three “hair workers and drapery specialists,” two “blocker-out” workers, one pedestal maker, and two general studio assistants’ (Seidler, 248).

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<sup>48</sup> Henry P. Leland, *Americans in Rome*, p. 9. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>49</sup> Angela Dunstan, ‘Nineteenth-Century Sculpture and the Imprint of Authenticity’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 19 (2014) < DOI: <http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.776>>, p. 8. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

The work of the Italian marble craftsmen was repeatedly linked to anxiety about the loss of authenticity that came from mass production. Marble polishers were accused of producing a ‘look of sameness in the face’ in nineteenth-century Roman sculpture that Story, in ‘Nature and Art’, had attributed to the medium’s general ‘subservien[ce] to Grecian’ art. Critics argued that, ‘the artisans’ familiarity with marble seemed to produce a cold contempt for the material, which they belaboured and abraded with monstrous facility’ (Earnest, 117).

This anxiety also took the form of accusations made by members of the city’s expatriate community that prominent sculptors were not responsible for their own works, so that debate about originality in sculpture echoed the broader questions being asked during the period ‘about the feasibility of maintaining one stable point of origin for products in a technological age.’<sup>50</sup> Hawthorne repurposes his distaste for workmen’s role in *The Marble Faun* in this context, wondering

how much of the admiration which our artists get for their buttons and buttonholes, their shoe-ties, their neckcloths [...] would be abated, if we were generally aware that the sculptor can claim no credit for such pretty performances, as immortalized in marble! They are not his work, but that of some nameless machine in human shape. (90-1)

His question of ‘abated admiration’ was a prescient one. The year after the publication of *The Marble Faun*, allegations surfaced that Harriet Hosmer’s *Zenobia in Chains*, which had received high praise at the Great Exhibition of 1862, was ‘really executed by an Italian workman in Rome.’<sup>51</sup> The charges were made in an obituary of British sculptor Alfred Gatley, whose death had been ‘accelerated by professional disappointment’ after his works at the 1862 Exhibition were overshadowed by the allegedly fraudulent *Zenobia*.

Gatley’s ‘Pharoah and his Host’ and ‘Song of Miriam’ are among the noblest productions of modern Art, yet (although no one had the

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<sup>50</sup> Clare Pettitt, *Patent Inventions—Intellectual Property and the Victorian Novel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 32. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>51</sup> Susan Waller, ‘The Artist, the Writer, and the Queen: Hosmer, Jameson, and “Zenobia”’, *Woman’s Art Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Spring - Summer, 1983), pp. 21-28 (p. 26).

hardihood to attack them) they attracted little attention beside the more meretricious charms of 'The Reading Girl' and the 'Zenobia'—said to be by Miss Hosmer, but really executed by an Italian workman at Rome. Mr. Gatley visited England during the Exhibition, but returned to Rome a disappointed man.<sup>52</sup>

For Hosmer, this charge was simply the final manifestation of a rumour that had itself been perpetuated and repeated around Rome: Anna Jameson had earlier referred in a letter to Hosmer to 'the malignant sarcasm of some of your rivals in Rome as to your having Mr. Gibson at your elbow'.<sup>53</sup> 'For seven years it has been whispered about me that I do not do my own work but employ a man to do it for me,' Hosmer wrote.<sup>54</sup>

Hosmer considered the allegations made against her to be grounded entirely in sexism. Her essay, 'The Process of Sculpture,' which appeared in *The Atlantic* in 1863, the year after the Gatley obituary was published, made a point of highlighting the ubiquity of workmen in all sculptors' studios:

The clay model having at last been rendered as perfect as possible, the sculptors work upon the statue is virtually ended; for it is then cast in plaster and given into the hands of the marble-workers, by whom, almost entirely, it is completed, the sculptor merely directing and correcting the work as it proceeds. This disclosure, I am aware, will shock the many, who often ingeniously discover traces of the sculptor's hand where they do not exist.<sup>55</sup>

Hosmer's description of the sculptor's process is both accurate and an aggressive riposte to criticism of her own practices and of the sculptural process more broadly. She co-opts the term 'merely', so frequently pared with 'mechanical' in descriptions of the role of workmen (not only Hawthorne's 'merely mechanical people', but Story's dismissive, 'merely mechanical work' (*Conversations*, 161)), to refer to the role of *all* sculptors in relation to their assistants. The reference to those 'who ingeniously discover traces of the sculptor's hand where they do not exist' is an assertion of authority and superior knowledge, designed to wrong-foot critics who,

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<sup>52</sup> 'Mr. Alfred Gatley,' *The Art Journal*, September 1, 1863, p. 181.

<sup>53</sup> Anna Jameson, quoted in Carr, p. 150.

<sup>54</sup> Harriet Hosmer, quoted in Belinda Jack, *Beatrice's Spell* (London: Random House, 2005), p. 139. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>55</sup> Hosmer, quoted in Carr, p. 372.

Angela Dunstan notes, ‘as sculptural practices became more transparent [...] demonstrated a preoccupation with the viewer’s ability to recover evidence of the sculptor’s touch, often by quite literally seeking the trace of the sculptor’s fingerprints on the statue itself’ (8). Hosmer reaffirms the hierarchy of power between artist and viewer, writer and reader. Arguing that, ‘had Thorwaldsen and Vogelberg been women, and employed one-half the amount of assistance they did in the cases mentioned, we should long since have heard the great merit of their works attributed to the skill of their workmen,’<sup>56</sup> Hosmer stated that ‘[w]e women artists have no objection to its being known that we employ assistants; we merely object to its being supposed that it is a system peculiar to ourselves.’<sup>57</sup> This claim is, however, contradicted by Charlotte Cushman, who wrote that the accusations about Hosmer had ‘almost driven Emma Stebbins wild’:

That she should be classed among those who would be believed to have their work done for them makes her too miserable, and to struggle along without the material help which all sculptors *must have* has become so entirely a necessity that she is assuming labor for which she has neither physical nor mental strength.<sup>58</sup>

Like Stebbins, Edmonia Lewis, who attracted attention amongst the expatriate sculptors for being not only female but also of African and Native American descent, and who had funded her journey to Italy by selling plaster copies of her bust of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, refused the assistance of workmen once in Rome. She took upon herself the ‘very hard and very fatiguing process’ of ‘putting up’ her clay and carving her own marble, ‘which scarcely any *male* sculptor does for himself.’<sup>59</sup>

Hosmer’s call for female sculptors to receive treatment equal to that of their male colleagues was subsequently answered; however, rather than freeing women

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<sup>56</sup> Harriet Hosmer, ‘The Process of Sculpture’, *The Atlantic Monthly*, December 1864.

<sup>57</sup> Hosmer, ‘The Process of Sculpture’.

<sup>58</sup> Charlotte Cushman to Emma Crow, February 4, 1864, quoted in Elizabeth Milroy, ‘The Public Career of Emma Stebbins: Work in Marble’, *Archives of American Art Journal* 33, no. 3 (1993), pp. 2-12 (p. 10).

<sup>59</sup> Curtis Ballard, ‘Edmonia Lewis,’ quoted by Charmaine A. Nelson in *The Color of Stone, Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), p. 39.

from suspicion of plagiarism, a decade later charges on the same grounds were made regarding the work and process of William Wetmore Story. As in the case of Hosmer, an allegation was publicly made that ‘Mr. Story is not the author of his own works.’<sup>60</sup> In response to the charge, friends of Story including James Russell Lowell, John Field, Hamilton Wild, and T. A. Trollope wrote a letter confirming that they had personally seen him at work in his ‘private modelling room’ and concluding ‘that Mr. Story is, in the fullest sense of the words, the author of the statues which bear his name.’<sup>61</sup>

In arguments about the relationship between the sculptor, the workmen and the author of the final work, the sculptor’s engagement with the model in clay form is depicted as the key, authentic phase of the creative work. It is Story’s presence in his ‘modeling room’ that proves him a genuine artist. Similarly, Maria Mitchell described Hosmer’s artistic prowess primarily in relation to clay modelling: ‘She fashions the clay to her ideal—every little touch of her fingers in the clay is a thought; she thinks in clay’ (150). Hiram Powers went further still and described the entire manual element of artistic work as inferior to that of mental labour: ‘True genius never condescends to dirty its fingers with mere labor! Does the genuine architect lay bricks! Does the commander in chief ever poke with the vulgar bayonet? . . . Genius was born to crack the whip.’<sup>62</sup> Powers’ formulation of genius is reminiscent of that of Romantic writers who ‘had been anxious to dispose of the model of craftsmanship for writing, and to insist instead on models of inspiration and genius’ (Pettitt, 159). Clare Pettitt argues that ‘The Great Exhibition [...] conspicuously entangled the arts and craft, handwork and machine work, making identifications between the two both easy and powerful, however dangerous in terms of protecting Romantic constructions of originality and value’ (159). This was an experience shared by visitors to Rome who witnessed the process of collaboration between artist and artisan by which sculpture was produced; the realization of the ‘entanglement’ of aesthetic and practical skills forced a new awareness of the inextricable link between processes of art and craft. The prioritization of Hosmer’s ‘thinking in clay’ and of Powers’ aloof, aggressive

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<sup>60</sup> ‘Editor’s Easy Chair’, *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, No. 242, Vol. 49 September 1874, pp. 585-590 (p. 588).

<sup>61</sup> Marsh, George P., E.W. McClellan, James Russell Lowell, John W. Field, Hamilton Wild, John Rollin Tilton, Arthur Dexter, and T. Adolphus Trollope, ‘Letter of Authenticity’, 10 April 1874, Box 6, Folder Misc 1 of 2, Story Family Papers, Ransom Center.

<sup>62</sup> Hiram Powers to Randolph Rogers, 13 January 1873, quoted in Seidler, p. 204.

‘genius’ are attempts to preserve an idea of Rome as a bastion of Romantic ‘spontaneous creation’ and rigorously deny the significance of mechanical work or craft to artistic production. This defence is, however, compromised by the fact that artists simultaneously defended their residence in Rome as a process of the ‘inbreathing of an influence from above and without’, and of genius as a ‘receptive capacity’ rather than a creative one, thus contradicting this image of the artist’s work as in itself creative (*Conversations*, 149).

In Hosmer’s ‘The Process of Sculpture’, her description of the development of her ‘authentic’ clay model into the finished marble recasts the workmen as translators: ‘[T]he relation of these workmen to the artist is precisely the same as that of the mere linguist to the author who, in another tongue, has given to the world some striking fancy or original thought’ (Carr, 373). In this analogy, she employs the mechanical ‘mere’ in describing the work of translation, with the effect of demeaning and simplifying the work of the translator as much as that of the workmen.

They translate the original thought of the sculptor, written in clay, into the language of marble. The translator may do his work well or ill—he may appreciate and preserve the delicacy of sentiment and grace which were stamped upon the clay, or he may render the artist’s meaning coarsely and unintelligibly. (Carr, 372-373)

In Hosmer’s formulation, the translator-workmen may or may not have the ability to transfer successfully the aura of the original model from clay to marble, depending on his ability to ‘appreciate and preserve’ it. Her argument rests on an assumption that a faithful, literal translation of any artwork or text is possible.

Conversely, in Story’s *Conversations in a Studio*, the definition of an artwork’s aura is its untranslatability. He terms it variously ‘a light, and life, and color,’ ‘the soul,’ ‘the essence,’ the ‘spirit,’ the ‘tone and perfume’ all of which terms, as has been previous discussed, expressed his notion of Roman artistic energy (99-101). In *Roba di Roma*, when describing the atmosphere of the entire city of Rome, he again uses these terms, before alighting on the word ‘aura’ itself: ‘The air seems to keep a sort of spiritual scent or trail of these old deeds, and to make them more real here than elsewhere. The ghosts of history haunt their ancient habitations. [...] The Past hovers like a subtle aura around the Present’ (82). Aura is impossible to translate: ‘No translation can give this, however well it may be done. There is a light, and life,



and color in the words [...] which makes them magical. [...] [T]he outline, the story, the bones, remain, but the soul is gone—the essence, the ethereal light, the perfume, is vanished’ (*Conversations*, 99). In this, Story’s position on translation, and by extension on the role of the ‘merely mechanical’ workmen in his studio, conforms to Benjamin’s view that, ‘that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art’ (*The Work of Art*, 221). ‘I only know,’ says Story’s Belton, ‘that it cannot be translated’ (*Conversations*, 101).

Hosmer’s vision of translation as an exact metaphor for the process of creating marble sculpture therefore differs from Story’s. This in turn, creates a problematic relationship between Story and his final, ‘translated’, marble statues.

This is the process; a workman comes and measures so many inches across that brow; the shoulders, so many inches; the sweep of the drapery, so wide. He cuts away the marble to a corresponding size. Another comes and gives more shapeliness to the general outline. Another, more skilful, one whom I have trained from his boyhood, will chisel more closely the curve of the lips, the set of the eyes. [...] Last of all, when they have done their part, I will give it soul. But the marble will never be mine only, as the clay has been.<sup>63</sup>

The process described here by Story is explored by Benjamin in his essay ‘The Task of the Translator’. Dismissing as ‘bad translations’ those that simply ‘transmit’ the sense of the source text rather than ‘its essential substance’ Benjamin argues that ‘the unfathomable, the mysterious, the “poetic”’ is ‘something that a translator can reproduce only if he is also—a poet’.<sup>64</sup> A successful translation, for Benjamin, is a collaboration between two poets, just as Story’s marble sculptures ‘will never be [his] only.’ Story must shape his workmen just as he shapes his clay, ‘train[ing] from boyhood’ those who will participate in his work in a process that is, necessarily, both mechanical and spiritual; and yet, though in this formulation successful translation is possible, it is nonetheless a form of loss.

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<sup>63</sup> Mary Clark Barnes, ‘A Glimpse of William Wetmore Story in His Studio’, *The Lamp – A Review and Record of Current Literature, Volume XXIX, August 1904-January 1905* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1905) pp. 154-156 (p. 156).

<sup>64</sup> Walter Benjamin, ‘The Task of the Translator’, in Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Ed.s) *Walter Benjamin, Selected Writings Volume One, 1913-1926* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 253-263 (p. 253). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

The debate about the role of workmen in sculptors' studios, couched in these terms of translation, originality, authenticity and aura forced sculptors to occupy uncomfortable and often contradictory positions regarding the creative power of the artist, the relationship between the artist and the artisan, and the relationship between the clay and marble forms of their sculptures. These positions were unstable in part because the artists' conception of aura was unstable. In Benjamin's description, 'aura' explicitly occupies a space; it envelops the shape and material presence of the original object. To mechanically reproduce is '[t]o pry an object from its shell, to destroy its aura' (*The Work of Art*, 219); this is a metaphor in which aura is hard, brittle, an encasing element. The same view of aura as external casing is echoed in 'The Task of the Translator' in which the relationship of content to language in the original text is 'like a fruit and its skin' (258). Less brittle than shell, the skin of the fruit is nonetheless also 'pried' from its contents and subsequently discarded.

Story, too, conceives of a residual waste product of the process of translation. His metaphor, though, is one of alchemy, and specifically, sublimation: '[Y]ou get a *caput mortuum*. All the tone and perfume is gone. The dead words remain, but the music has fled' (*Conversations*, 101). In the practice of alchemy, the *caput mortuum* (literally 'dead head' in Latin) is the residual substance, considered useless, left behind after a substance has transitioned directly from its solid form into a gas. Unlike in Benjamin's metaphor, however, the aura in Story's is not the *caput mortuum*, rather it is the gas into which the solid has transformed, leaving the residue behind. The problem of translation for Story is not that the aura is destroyed when separated from the original object, but rather that it is impossible to control or contain.

Aura was, to Hawthorne, the 'evanescent and ethereal life', the 'flitting fragrance' (*Marble Faun*, 47); to Hosmer it was 'original thought' and 'delicacy of sentiment and grace' (Carr, 372); and to Story, 'the soul', the 'essence', the 'spirit', the 'perfume' (*Conversations*, 99-101). For these artists, aura as an analogue to Roman energy was an unembodied, immaterial substance contained within an original artwork that performed the role of storage, acting less like a shell therefore and more like a gas. It sublimated. As such, it had the innate capacity to move between states and objects, but could not be controlled by 'mere linguists' or 'merely mechanical people'. The question that informed debates on authenticity and copying at this time was not, therefore, whether it was ever possible for aura to be transferred or reproduced, but in which conditions, and by whom, this might be achieved.

### **Dilution and ‘Merely Mechanical Reproduction’**

The question of the possible successful transference of aura was a pressing one to visitors to Rome, not only because of the debate regarding the place of originality in the neoclassical project and the element of copying that was a necessary part of the process of sculpting in marble, but also because the city itself was renowned for its sale of copies of famous artworks. Charles Weld’s *Last Winter in Rome* describes the production and sale of copies in the city as a ‘manufacturing process’.

How many copies do you suppose,’ I asked one of the best-known copyists of the old masters, ‘have you made of Guido’s Beatrice Cenci?’ ‘Upwards of five hundred,’ he replied. Now, as the studio of this copyist contains copies of all the celebrated pictures in Rome [...] most of which he and his assistants have produced over and over again, some idea may be formed of the manufacturing process going on in this speciality. (383)

It was not only, therefore, the workmen assisting sculptors in their studios who were considered ‘merely mechanical’. The ‘manufacturing process’ Weld describes was responsible for a ‘diluting process’ caused by ‘copying copies’, so that, just as the first marble iteration of a sculptor’s statue attracted higher prices than subsequent versions, ‘proprietors of the great masterpieces in Rome [...] affix notices in their picture-galleries to the effect that no copy can be considered genuine that has not the seal of the proprietor of the original attached to it’ (383).

The portrait of Beatrice Cenci became, in the eyes of artists and writers concerned with copying in the city, the face and symbol of this ‘diluting’ ‘manufacturing process’. The portrait, attributed during this period to Guido Reni,<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> See Belinda Jack, p. 5. The portrait was initially described, in a 1783 catalogue of paintings at the palace, as a ‘Picture of a head. Portrait, believed to be of the Cenci girl. Artist unknown,’ but was subsequently attributed to Guido Reni. See also

was subject to a heightened level of interest amongst expatriate artists and tourists in Rome, for whom their experience of the painting was mediated by Shelley's play, *The Cenci* (1819): Shelley's preface to the play included a description of the portrait alongside the suggestion that it was 'taken by Guido during her confinement in prison': based on the painting's depiction, Shelley concluded that, 'Beatrice Cenci appears to have been one of those rare persons in whom energy and gentleness dwell together without destroying one another' (Reiman and Powers, 242). Like Dickens' *Picture from Italy*, which was 'written on the spot' and thus contained 'the liveliest impressions of novelty and freshness' (10), Shelley suggests that the circumstances of the painting of the portrait are captured and transmitted by the art object; the 'energy' of Beatrice Cenci is still evident. This energy, once accessed, he transmits into his own artwork, which provided the first encounter with the subject matter—and the painting—of many of the visitors who went on to view it in Rome. So linked was the story of Beatrice Cenci with Shelley's work that when Harriet Hosmer was traveling to London, where her own *Beatrice Cenci* statue was to be displayed at the Royal Academy, '[t]o pass the time she wrote parodies of Shelley' (Jack, 137).

Despite this initial experience of mediation via a form of copying across different media, visitors viewing the original painting, displayed in the Barberini Palace, reported intense reactions that were frequently couched in terms of its resistance to copying: 'No copy, engraved or in oils, gives the remotest idea of it,' wrote Peabody Hawthorne; 'One must *see* that backward look to have the least idea of its power' (212-14). Nathaniel Hawthorne twice attempted to describe the painting and twice gave up: after his first viewing he wrote, 'as regards Beatrice Cenci, I might as well not try to say anything, for its spell is indefinable [...] no artist did it, nor could do it again' (*Notebooks*, 93); a second time, he found that 'the picture is quite indescribable' (*Notebooks*, 520). In consequence of the intense feelings the original painting inspired in viewers, the 'Beatrice Cenci' was both the most densely stocked copy Rome's picture shops, and a particularly disheartening sight to those already concerned with the effects of copying.

It is all over Rome, in every picture dealer's shop, of every size;  
besides being engraved. In the copies are red eyelids, and other merely

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Patricia Pulham, p. 89: '[T]he portrait of Beatrice Cenci is now thought to have been painted by a woman artist of [Guido's] circle, Elisabetta Sirani.'

external signs of sorrow. In the original the infinite desolation, the unfathomable grief, are made evident through features of perfect beauty[.] (Peabody Hawthorne, 212-213)

These ‘manufactured’ copies were superficial, ‘merely external,’ devoid of the aura that was conceived as being contained within, rather than encasing, the artwork. Story considered the ‘white turban and red eyes’ of the copies a form of ‘stereotyping’ of the original portrait. It had been reduced to its crudest elements; ‘staled by copy and description’ (*Roba*, 7).

*The Marble Faun* recasts the ‘diluting’ or ‘staling’ process of copying copies more forcefully as an act of denigration, again using a reference to the Beatrice Cenci portrait to make this point. A painting made by an unnamed artist who has observed Hilda wandering the art galleries of Rome depicts her, ‘gazing with sad and earnest horror at a bloodspot which she seemed just then to have discovered on her white robe’. The painter titles his work, ‘Innocence, dying of a Blood-stain’. Subsequently, the painting is reproduced throughout the city to such an extent that ‘Copies of an engraving from it may still be found in the print shops along the Corso’. Viewers of the copied portrait believe that it is itself a copy: ‘By many connoisseurs, the idea of the face was supposed to have been suggested by the portrait of Beatrice Cenci’. In the process of its sale and reproduction, the picture is re-named, and thus re-framed, ‘The Signorina’s Vengeance.’ The innocent original (Hilda), and the innocent original representation of her (‘Innocence, dying of a Blood-stain’) are corrupted in the process of reproduction that transforms her from a passive observer of sin to an active participant in it who has murdered her lover. ‘Thus coarsely does the world translate all finer griefs that meet its eye’, concludes Hawthorne (258).

This ‘coarse translation’ is carried out, in *The Marble Faun*, mechanically. Like Peabody Hawthorne, Nathaniel Hawthorne finds that Rome’s copies are ‘only a superficial imitation.’

Copies of the old masters in this sense are produced by thousands; there are artists, as we have said, who spend their lives in painting the works, or perhaps one single work, of one illustrious painter over and over again: thus they convert themselves into Guido machines, or Raphaelic machines. Their performances, it is true, are often wonderfully deceptive to a careless eye; but working entirely from the outside, and seeking only to reproduce the surface, these men are sure to leave out that indefinable nothing, that inestimable something, that

constitutes the life and soul through which the picture gets its immortality. (*Marble Faun*, 48)

Whereas for Benjamin, the shell is the element lost in reproduction, here, the copies are nothing but shells: the copyists create surfaces only. Though described directly in terms of mass production and machinery, it is significant nonetheless that these copyists were in fact engaging in a form of manual, rather than mechanical reproduction. Benjamin notes that, ‘Confronted with its manual reproduction, which was usually branded as a forgery, the original preserved all its authority; not so vis-à-vis technical reproduction [...] [P]rocess reproduction is more independent of the original than manual reproduction’ (*The Work of Art*, 220). Considered in these terms, then, the Roman mass-produced manual copies were received both as forms of forgeries, and also as having been ‘diluted’ by a process of copying copies, as ‘independent of the original’ as the products of ‘process reproduction’. Roman copies were at once duplicitous and vacuous.

The fear of forgeries, and the fear of being duped by them, underpinned much of the anxiety regarding Roman copies. Peabody Hawthorne’s *Notes in England and Italy* is overwhelmingly concerned with questions of authenticity relating to duplication, and by association, being duped. From the very first pages, in which she recounts arriving in Boston, Lincolnshire, from Boston, Massachusetts, she begins an intense engagement with the relationship between originals and copies: ‘Does it not look delightfully to see the name of that beloved city for my date? But this original old town is not in the least like our “Athens”’ (50). Once the Hawthornes reached Rome, the experience of encountering originals, duplicates or reiterations which she had already experienced as original, was repeated.

I saw today, for the first time [...] the Chanting Cherubs, which Greenough so exactly copied in marble. According to Mr. Mozier, of Rome, Greenough never originated the slightest thing, but copied the antique [...] Here are these, at any rate, perfectly familiar to me through Greenough’s group, which I saw so many years ago in Boston, and always supposed his own conception. No one ever told me they were copies. (360)

Joseph Mozier, to whom Peabody Hawthorne attributes the accusation that Greenough’s sculpture was a copy, was also responsible for making the plagiarism charges against Hosmer; as such, the true relationship between the two works

described above is unclear (Culkin, 71). Nonetheless, Peabody Hawthorne experiences, along with the familiar sense of Roman recognition, the destabilizing sensation of having been deceived—of having perceived originality, and therefore aura, where there was none. This fear goes on to colour her view of copying in general; in the same diary entry she describes witnessing, before Michel Angelo's 'Three Fates', an artist 'copying it badly, which is a pity; for his copy will deceive somebody, who will suppose it like the original' (360). Nathaniel Hawthorne too records dismay at the undetectable inauthenticity of Roman things: in the Church of Domine Quo Vadi with Anna Jameson, she shows him 'the prints of two feet side by side, impressed into its surface [...]. These, she informed me, were supposed to be the miraculous prints of the Saviour's feet'. Later, 'on looking into Murray, I am mortified to find that they are merely facsimiles of the original impressions.' Nathaniel Hawthorne retrospectively suggests that inauthenticity was discernible: 'The marks of sculpture seemed to me, indeed, very evident in these prints', but there is, nonetheless, a jarring sense of disappointment (*Notebooks*, 207).

In accounts of Roman copies, the repeated insistence on their superficiality and the idea that they lacked the aura of the original artwork demonstrated confidence in the viewer's ability to discern the difference between an original and a copy. Peabody Hawthorne's belief that the Old Masters she encountered in Rome contained 'power' and 'rich meaning' of which 'no copy [...] gives the remotest idea' relied on her own ability to detect those copies. Her plaintive note about her initial experience of Greenough's 'Chanting Cherubs' that, 'No one ever told me they were copies' indicates that the experience of being duped compromised not only that faith, but also an understanding of the value of art, and the way that value behaved in contemporary society. The idea that artists could benefit from exposure to, and the release of, the energy of art objects in Rome, as explored in Chapter One, and that Roman energy was 'received' by artists and 'digested' by them into their own art, as argued earlier in this chapter, was one that bolstered a worldview of continuous and cyclical flows of energy. In the Roman context particularly, art objects imbued with tangible and yet mobile aura were evidence not only of Rome's power and continued status as 'the Eternal City', but of the necessity and value of the expatriate artistic community's residence there. Encounters with fraudulent works—sudden discoveries that artworks considered potent were in fact impotent—profoundly disrupted this belief system,

demonstrating as it did an absence of ‘aura’ and energy, and thus a marked failure of continuity. Forgeries suggested entropy.

Some stories of ‘fakes’ during the period emphasised the easy detection of the fraud, with the effect of minimising the disruptive nihilism of undetected counterfeits. In these stories, the purchaser of the fake is revealed as a fraud too, a philistine masquerading as a connoisseur, and thus a kind of equilibrium remains: the authentic art-viewer is permitted to continue occupying the realm of authentic art. Weld describes the ‘veritable manufacture’ of ‘spurious “ancient pictures” as being aimed at ‘the hoped-for dupe’ (282). In an 1861 article entitled ‘The Picture Sale,’ the *Cornhill Magazine* establishes a comparison between the ‘old-fashioned fossils of men,’ who attend the auction, ‘looking as if they had been dug up; and who must be dug down again,’ the ‘musty-looking, dusty-looking’ art dealers, and the ‘sombre, grimy landscapes, almost invisible from the dirt of ages,’ on sale. Customer, merchant and merchandise are conflated in these descriptions of decay. ‘The wonder is,’ the article moves to conclude, ‘where the pictures all come from—these endless “old masters”?’<sup>66</sup> This note of doubt regarding the authenticity of the artworks echoes a description of the buyers themselves as ‘never appear[ing] anywhere else’, again indicating an equivalence between the two: both buyer and commodity are fakes. Furthermore, the question mark following the phrase ‘endless “old masters”’, already couched in the scepticism of quotation marks, sounds a note of alarm regarding the idea that genuine ‘old masters’ are in fact a limited resource. The very existence of fraudulent artwork gives rise to fears that, far from being in limitless, recyclable supply, artistic ‘aura’ and authentic artistic energy may well be running out. Demand has exceeded supply.

Story’s *Conversations* similarly derides the easily duped: ‘There is one thing worse than an amateur or a connoisseur: it is an amatōōr or a connysōōr... They admire by rule, and the misemploy all the slang words of art’ (15). Mallett tells the story of ‘Jefferson J. Q. Shoddy of New York’, who purchased a ‘Gheedo’, convinced ‘it is the real thing and no mistake, and in such perfect preservation that you might think it had been painted last week’ (5). Mrs. Shoddy tells Mallett that the subject of the painting is ‘Jupiter and Ten’: ‘Mrs. Shoddy was quite right, only her pronunciation was a little faulty. The subject written out plainly was this—JUPITER AND IO’ (6).

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<sup>66</sup> ‘The Picture Sale,’ *Cornhill Magazine*, Vol. 4, 1861, pp. 470-471 (p. 471).



The situation of this anecdote within the broader context of ‘conversations in a studio’ between two erudite, artistic and literate young men establishes a secure and comforting distance between these characters—refined, aware, superior—and the laughable ignorance of Mr and Mrs Shoddy. This security is extended, too, to the reader, who is in on the joke. Thus, the story works to insulate an ‘authentic’ art world, inhabited by discerning artists and knowing readers, from the vulgar trade in counterfeits going on beyond the safe confines of the studio.

For Peabody Hawthorne, however, these confusions were not at such a safe remove from her own experience. Long before her discovery of the original *Chanting Cherubs* in Italy, she had found herself on the other end of the con, in the role of duper rather than dupe. Carol Hanbery MacKay notes that ‘Sophia always acknowledged her sources of inspiration’ and that, having painted a series of landscapes ‘in the manner of Salvator Rosa’ ‘she was quite chagrined when the *Athenaeum* falsely ascribed one of her Rosa copies as her own work.’<sup>67</sup>

Mark Twain’s sketch ‘The Capitoline Venus’ (1869) extends the predicament Peabody Hawthorne experienced even further, so that an artist unwittingly profits from one of his statues, which has been misidentified as ‘a Venus, and the work of some unknown but sublimely gifted artist of the third century before Christ’.<sup>68</sup> In Twain’s story, a sculptor, George, complains to his friend John Smith that he needs ‘fifty thousand dollars’ in order to marry the girl he loves. Smith, in response, ‘took up a hammer and deliberately smashed’ George’s statue of ‘America’, until it was ‘a fragmentary ruin’ (32). Smith removes the ruined ‘America’ and later returns with the money George needs, having purchased land in the Campagna, buried the statue, then arranged an excavation to ‘discover’ it. This is an account of a successful version of the trick Story attempted to play on Charles T. Newton, and a re-telling of Michelangelo’s con. Only in the final scene of the story does the innocent George, wandering through the Capitol with his wife, discover the ruse and proclaim, ‘Ingenious Smith!—gifted Smith!—noble Smith! Author of all our bliss!’ (35).

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<sup>67</sup> Carol Hanbery MacKay, ‘Hawthorne, Sophia, and Hilda as Copyists: Duplication and Transformation in “*The Marble Faun*”’, *Browning Institute Studies* 12 (1984), pp. 93-120 (p. 107).

<sup>68</sup> Mark Twain, ‘The Capitoline Venus’, in *The Signet Classic Book of Mark Twain’s Short Stories*, ed. by Justin Kaplan (New York: Signet Classics, 2006) pp. 30-36 (p. 34). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

George's description of his friend as the 'author' suggests that the extent to which the transformation of the statue over the course of the con has complicated both the identity of the work and that of the artist.

The final line of 'The Capitoline Venus' is one of distraction and loss of control. Following his rapturous praise of Smith, George turns to his wife: 'Hark! Do you know what that wheeze means? Mary, that cub has got the whooping-cough. Will you never learn to take care of the children!' (35). The relationship of the sick American child in Rome to the entropy of Roman artistic energy is explored by James in *Daisy Miller* (1879) and is discussed in the conclusion of this thesis; however, in the context of a debate regarding control and copying, this opaque closing line recasts the whole narrative as one in which, just as the mother has no control or ability to care for her children, the artist has relinquished control of his artwork. Both George's luck and his fraudulence have been brought about by relinquishing artistic control to his friend, in a relationship that echoes that of writer and publisher, and thus draws a link between anxiety regarding forgery and the on-going contentious debate regarding copyright. 'The Capitoline Venus' is as much a story about the publication of literary work as it is about artistic fraud: Twain indicates that publication is, in a sense, an inevitable relinquishment of ownership of work that could then be used, misnamed and misappropriated by strangers even more anonymous than the 'John Smith' of his story.

William Wetmore Story's essay-poem 'An Author's View on Copyright' relates anxieties regarding copyright and fraud to his ideas on the circulation of artistic energy. His author-character argues that thought expressed in books, whose 'form is permanent [...] inorganic, determined, fixed [...] belongs to us, is wholly ours / No one can falsify it, claim or change.'<sup>69</sup> However, in order to maintain this right to ownership, the author figure must reverse Story's earlier-discussed views regarding genius as 'receptive' rather than 'creative': he has to argue that he 'created' them alone, that he took nothing in order to create them: 'Sure if there is anything on Earth / To which I have a claim of ownership, / To dear, perpetual ownership, it is / To that which I create, make as it were / From nothing, shaping it from out my brain'.<sup>70</sup> To

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<sup>69</sup> William Wetmore Story, 'An Author's Views of Copyright', Handwritten Manuscript, Undated, Box 6, Folder: Misc 2 of 2, Story Family Papers, Ransom Center.

<sup>70</sup> Story, 'Copyright'.

claim copyright, the author needs to remove himself and his works, intellectually, from the cycle of energy on which at other times he depends.

The poem's satirical solution to the 'theft' of property enabled by copyright law is to refrain from speaking or writing anything down; in this way, 'I have a thousand thoughts / Good, bad, that now are prisoned in myself, / Banned there by silence,'<sup>71</sup> although the poem's very existence belies the fact that at least its own particular 'thoughts' are no longer 'prisoned' in the mind of the poet. The secondary speaker in the poem, however, urges the author to make a more complete return to participation in the cycling of energy: 'Why keep them hidden—better to speak out / We all know they exist, tied in your mind / Lying in your desk – then why not publish them—/ The world awaits them—longs for them—from them / Would draw sweet nourishment and joy and hope.'<sup>72</sup> This secondary portrait of the relationship between writer and reader is reminiscent of Story's earlier formulation of inspiration as receptive: not only will the world draw energy ('sweet nourishment') from the published works, but a prior knowledge that 'they exist, tied in your mind' suggests an even closer connection to the poet's inspiration—an energetic link established even before expression. It is significant, nonetheless, that Story never did publish this poem. This particular stage of acute anxiety about iteration and publication caused a disruption to his participation in the cycling of artistic energy.

### **III. THE ORIGINAL COPY: AUTHENTICITY AND ENERGY TRANSFER IN ROMAN COPYING**

#### **'Spiritual' Copying as Preservation**

Towards the end of her life, Harriet Hosmer became increasingly preoccupied with the recycling of energy; in 1880 it was reported that 'Miss Hosmer has given up art and is devoting her mind and fortune to the perfecting of what she supposes to be the discovery of perpetual motion': 'I would rather have my fame rest upon the discovery

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<sup>71</sup> Story, 'Copyright'.

<sup>72</sup> Story, 'Copyright'.

of perpetual motion than upon my achievement in art'.<sup>73</sup> Hosmer invested so much time and money in the project that Emma Cullum Cortazzo noted, '[s]he has given up her apartment and is living with the Storys' (304). Gabrielle Gopinath finds that this new project 'could not have been in greater contrast to her definitively inert marble oeuvre'.<sup>74</sup> However, having spent her artistic career dedicated to recycling Roman energy in neoclassical sculpture, Hosmer's change of medium was not an indication of a rift in her ambitions, but rather a natural continuation of her recycling project: both her artwork and her invention shared the same goal of ensuring 'perpetual' energy. Charles Colbert makes explicit the link between Hosmer's two efforts, identifying via her spiritualist beliefs that her sculpture of *Puck* (1856) 'was propelled [...] by the same imponderable fluids that kept the cosmos on its eternal rounds,' and thus that Hosmer's later work was to 'tap these forces to run a motor that could usher in a millennium of prosperity'.<sup>75</sup> *The Boston Daily Advertiser* reported that, following '[m]ysterious hints' from Italy that Hosmer 'had discovered a new force more powerful than water or steam, and more subtle than any motive agent yet brought under human control' by 'the use of the permanent magnet as a motive power; requiring no battery, no electric currents, no induced magnetic action whatsoever': 'the happy woman is rejoicing in the belief that she has solved the unsolvable problem; and has added one more to the immortal names that were not born to die.'<sup>76</sup> In discovering the key to perpetual motion, the article suggests, Hosmer herself had become immortal: the fate of the artist's life and the energetic potential of the things he or she makes share the same outcome.

Hosmer's response to the vexed issue of recycling artistic energy operated, within a scientific context, a form of spiritual recycling that focused on energy rather

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<sup>73</sup> Emma Cullum Cortazzo, *Emma Cullum Cortazzo, 1842-1918* (Meadville: E. H. Shartle, 1919), p. 304. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text. See also Culkin, p. 161.

<sup>74</sup> Gabrielle Gopinath, 'Harriet Hosmer and the Feminine Sublime', *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2005), pp. 63-81 (p. 81). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>75</sup> Charles Colbert, *Haunted Visions: Spiritualism and American Art* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), p. 88. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>76</sup> *Boston Daily Advertiser*, November 11, 1878, quoted in *Artists of the Nineteenth Century and their Works: A Handbook*, Vol. 1, Clara Erskine Clement and Laurence Hutton (Boston: Houghton, Osgood and Company, 1879), p. 367.

than the forms within which it was contained, and thus sought to avoid the ‘empty’ copies of mechanical reproduction. Other artists focused instead on methods by which this could be achieved within an artistic context, and confronted the tensions between restoration, preservation, reproduction and recycling.<sup>77</sup> ‘Do not let us talk then of restoration,’ writes Ruskin in his discussion of the role of architecture in facilitating memory in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849).

The thing is a Lie from beginning to end. You may make a model of a building as you may of a corpse, and your model may have the shell of the old walls within it as your cast might have the skeleton, with what advantage I neither see nor care; but the old building is destroyed[.]<sup>78</sup>

Here, Ruskin propounds the opinion expressed by philosopher Max Black, whose exploration of the use of scale models in scientific studies identifies the paradox that, ‘There is no such thing as a perfectly faithful model: only by being unfaithful in some respect can a model represent its original.’<sup>79</sup> Restoration, for Ruskin, presents the same rupture between past and present—an interruption to the cycling of artistic energy—that forgery and forms of copying do for Story, Peabody Hawthorne and others. There remains the empty shell, devoid of energy, like the superficial, empty copies dismissed as ‘merely external’ by Peabody Hawthorne (212-3).

Ruskin’s criticism of restoration arose, in ways that on the surface appear paradoxical, from a passion for preservation that Italy inspired in him: Ruskin’s ‘pioneering commitment to conservation was prompted by his enraged awareness of the way in which Italian buildings had been damaged or neglected,’ writes Nicholas

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<sup>77</sup> Simon Goldhill outlines the Victorian debate regarding the merits of preservation versus restoration in *The Buried Life of Things: How Objects Made History in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 138-183. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>78</sup> John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture: Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (Boston: Dana Estes & Company, 1900), p. 185.

<sup>79</sup> Max Black, ‘Models and Archetypes’, in *Exploring the Scientific Method: Cases and Questions: A New Approach to Teaching and Learning Philosophy of Science*, ed. by Stephen Gimble (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2011), pp. 256-264 (p. 257). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

Shrimpton.<sup>80</sup> Dehn Gilmore relates the preservationist urges of writers during this period to the parallel work undertaken by national museums, noting that both

shared the experience of seeming to endanger precisely what they sought to protect, and [...] had to deliberate about the costs and benefits of going after the full reconstruction (the novel) or restoration (the museum) of what once had been. Choose to retouch a painting and one might erase exactly what one wanted to maintain [...]. Yet fail to do these things, and dirt, decay, and the hazy ebb of memory might prove destroyers. (14-15)

Ruskin, whose attention moved between visual and literary cultures and combined them in the breadth of his concerns, was acutely disturbed by the threat of entropy, the ‘dirt, decay, and the hazy ebb of memory’ that Italy presented to him, and was thus exploring ways in which it could be countered artistically. ‘What is at stake here,’ writes Simon Goldhill of the Victorian debate about restoration, ‘is authenticity, an authenticity of feeling, of history, of aesthetics’ (140). Elizabeth Anne McCauley identifies a preference, amongst nineteenth-century professors and students of sculpture, for studying ‘casts of classical sculptures’ instead of ‘the originals, which not only often had dingy and yellowed surfaces but had suffered through multiple generations of inaccurate restoration.’<sup>81</sup> Ideas regarding the circulation of artistic energy were key to this thinking: artists such as Peabody Hawthorne formulated ways in which certain forms of channelling of Roman energy into copies of artworks could play a successful preservative rather than restorative role that did not, in Ruskin’s terms, create ‘a Lie from beginning to end’. These ideas built on the writings by those in the forgery debate who, despite the complicated anxiety surrounding fraud, spoke in its favour.

Aviva Breifel highlights an 1826 article in the *Times* that ‘argues that the sale of fake Old Masters should be considered a “mutual advantage” for the dealer and the buyer, as both end up getting what they want: money and a masterpiece of whose

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<sup>80</sup> Nicholas Shrimpton, ‘Italy’, in *The Cambridge Companion to John Ruskin*, ed. by Francis O’Gorman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 49-65 (p. 64).

<sup>81</sup> McCauley, p. 110.

fraudulence the buyer is unaware.’<sup>82</sup> The writer goes on to reason that, ‘If lying and deceit are to be prohibited, we are come to a stand-still—the world and its concerns are at an end. This is a commercial country.’<sup>83</sup> Here, then, the author puts forward the opposite view to that proposed by the accounts considered above. Whereas for Story and Twain, and frequently for Peabody Hawthorne, the notion of fraudulent art forces a disruptive awareness of loss and a denial of any cyclical or recyclable pattern of artistic creation, the writer of this *Times* article praises, albeit with a degree of satire, the trade in forgeries for contributing to the national economy and preventing what would otherwise be a ‘stand-still’ or, put even more bluntly, ‘an end’. This opinion recurs, across the Atlantic and sixty years later, in Sheridan Ford’s *Art: A Commodity*, which argues that the prevalence of forgeries in America was evidence of economic plenty. ‘The existence of fakes,’ Breifel summarises, ‘was material proof of cultural abundance’ (8).

Similar arguments enabled members of the expatriate artistic community in Rome to view the existence and perpetuation of exact replicas and copies, although not precisely forgeries, as an advantage rather than a disadvantage. Much in the same way that Ford and the author of the 1826 *Times* article identified a relationship between the sale of copies and the perpetuation of economic energy, artists and writers, most notably Peabody Hawthorne but also Harriet Hosmer, considered some Roman copies essential to the perpetuation and preservation of artistic Roman energy described and relied upon by artists such as Hosmer herself, William Wetmore Story and Henry James’ sculptor character Roderick Hudson. Goldhill describes how restoration, for its Victorian proponents, was bound up with ideas of spiritual continuity: it was seen as ‘the reconstruction of the necessary and symbolically charged topography for a proper religious life,’ and in order to ‘get (back) to a full and real spiritual experience, it will take restoration’ (147; 141). In Rome, where artistic energy was experienced in spiritual terms, particularly by Peabody Hawthorne, her preservative recycling through copying was likewise a spiritual practice.

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<sup>82</sup> Aviva Breifel, *The Deceivers: Art Forgery and Identity in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006) p. 6. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>83</sup> ‘Defence of Picture Auctions and Dealers’, *Times*, 1 February 1826, p. 4.

For Hosmer, Rome's relationship to copying and copyists was what brought her to the city: in Maria Mitchell's account of Hosmer's initial move from America to Rome, its skilled copyists are treated as a key resource:

She might model her busts in the clay of her own soil, but who should follow out in marble the delicate thought which the clay expressed? The workmen of Massachusetts tended the looms, built the railroads, and read the newspapers. The hard-handed men of Italy worked in marble from the designs put before them [...] none of them dreamed of ideas; they were copyists,--the very hand-work that her head needed. (149-150)

The industries of Massachusetts and Rome are placed in parallel in Mitchell's account. In her description of Massachusetts, three examples of modern industrialised mass culture are juxtaposed: power looms, the target of Luddite action in England earlier in the century, replaced the need for skilled hand weavers; the development of the railways, which boosted domestic iron and timber industries, contributed to an increasingly ordered and mechanised sense of time and place; the spread of print news media, aided by advances in printing technologies and increased ease of distribution via the railways, similarly contributed to a culture of mass production and regulation of both information and time.<sup>84</sup> Mitchell's juxtaposition suggests similarity between the work performed by the copyist workmen of Rome and the industrial labour of their American counterparts. Despite the description of the workmen's role as 'hand-work', the process of production is nonetheless organised around distinct divisions of labour, drawing a direct link between the manufacturing cultures of New England and Rome. The two places operate on similar systems: both organised, both industrial. The difference is simply that the commodities they produce differ: the factories of Massachusetts produce fabric; the factory of Rome produces art.

Peabody Hawthorne's *Notes* presents a similar juxtaposition to that formulated by Maria Mitchell. Her opening chapters are focused on time spent in

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<sup>84</sup> Gail Fowler Mohanty, *Labor and Laborers of the Loom: Mechanization and Handloom Weavers, 1780-1840* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 114; Wolfgang Schivelbusch, 'Railroad Space and Railroad Time', *New German Critique*, No. 14 (Spring, 1978), pp. 31-40 (p. 31); Mark W. Turner, 'Periodical Time in the Nineteenth Century', *Media History*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (2002), pp. 183-196 (p. 183). Further references to these editions are given after quotations in the text.



England, where her preoccupation is industrial. A Lancashire town was ‘a monument that seemed to be erected to the honor of the Smoke-Demon,’ from which ‘a long plume of black smoke continually floated [...] like the incense of a bad heart’ (7). Manchester was ‘a great emporium of soot and mire’ (26). The relationship between the process and the product was shocking: ‘Dear me! At what a cost come forth, so clean and splendid, all our pretty prints, and silks, and velvets!’ (7). When the Hawthornes travelled from England to Italy, this concern lingered. The relationship of the process of reproduction to the art object itself remained key to Peabody Hawthorne’s conceptualization of Rome so that, over and over again in her narrative, ‘the original artwork [is] displayed alongside the seated figure of a copyist before an easel’ (Formichella Eldsden, 85). The ‘vulgar’ copying she witnessed provoked much the same distaste as the ‘soot and mire’ of the English industrial town; a response that echoed Hawthorne’s derisive observation of Rome’s ‘Guido machines, or Raphaelic machines’ (*Marble Faun*, 48). Formichella Eldsden finds that *Notes*, ‘voices Sophia’s concern that nineteenth-century progress and industrialization menace the creative process and interfere with a spectator’s apprehension of art’ (81).

However, as Formichella Eldsden observes, Peabody Hawthorne’s reaction to copying in *Notes* is complicated by her own role as a copyist; she had experience both as a professional copyist of artworks in her youth and the early years of her marriage, and in her role as author of a text that comprises a series of ‘verbal copies of drawings’ that attempt ‘to render, recreate, and *increase* the visual intensity of Italian art so that her audience might appreciate its value’ (77-8). In acknowledging her attempt to ‘to render into words what Titian’s pencil alone can manifest’, Peabody Hawthorne positions herself as a reluctant copyist, avowedly pessimistic about her chances of success, and yet belying relentless optimism in the very fact of her repeated attempts (264).

Like Hosmer, Peabody Hawthorne finds a meaning and purpose to Roman copying, and like Hosmer, this meaning is related to the preservation and recycling of Roman energy:

Oh, why does not some one draw and engrave the divine creations of the old masters in fresco, before they are all faded away! I should think Pio Nono would be better employed in preserving such works from destruction than in writing encyclical letters; for I believe he would save more souls by it. (312)

This is a plea for copying as an act of preservation, not only of the images of the ‘old masters in fresco’ but also of the ‘spirit and truth’—the energy—they embody, and, as a consequence, the human soul. Peabody Hawthorne’s praise of artworks in *Notes* was frequently couched in religious terms; her conception of aura remained closely linked to what Benjamin terms the ‘cult’ value of the artwork: ‘the unique value of the “authentic” work of art has its basis in ritual, the location of its original use value’ (*The Work of Art*, 224). While Benjamin views the religious origins of art’s cult value as growing increasingly distinct, though nonetheless ever-present, for Peabody Hawthorne ‘aura’ was intimately linked with the meanings and values of Christianity. The recycling of artistic energy proposed here would therefore have, in her formulation, direct spiritual consequences as that energy was passed on to viewers. Her reference to encyclical letters illustrates the power she imbued in these ideal copies. Just as the presence of and practices surrounding Roman Catholic relics changed the way Protestant visitors to Rome interacted with art objects in the city, so too could reproductions of Roman artworks act in the same way as, and in fact more effectively than, a Papal letter: encyclical, circular, circulating. On viewing a chapel in which paintings had been ‘whitewashed over, and [...] injured and then repaired and patched’, Peabody Hawthorne asks, ‘Oh, where are the artists to draw these departing glories, that they may be engraved for a never-ending inspiration to all present and future time!’ (405). Ideal copying can enable a ‘never-ending inspiration’ that would, if left outside the circle of copying and distribution, end up ‘vanishing into the past’ (405).

Peabody Hawthorne’s ideal copies, which preserve inspiration for ‘all present and future time’, behave in the same way as Benjamin’s successful translations in ‘The Task of the Translator’, which issue ‘from the original—not so much from its life as from its afterlife’ (254). For Benjamin, ‘Translations that are more than transmissions of subject matter come into being when a work, in the course of its survival, has reached the age of its fame. [...] In them the life of the originals attains its latest, continually renewed, and most complete unfolding’ (*Task of the Translator*, 255). Peabody Hawthorne’s plea for copyists to ‘draw [the] departing glories’ she encounters in Rome is a call for ‘the life of the originals’ to be ‘continually renewed’ through copying.

These ideal, preserving copies depend on a particular kind of copying process and a particular kind of copyist. While most of the copyists described in *Notes* are dismissed as obstructing the cycling flow of energy—‘his easel was much in my way’, ‘they only hide the masterpiece they pretend to repeat’—some copyists possess qualities that elevate their work to the point of participating in the cycle (236; 260).

A young artist was sitting there, copying the groups and single figures with a lead-pencil, in an extraordinary manner, and with the utmost fidelity. He, and others as accomplished and faithful, should be commissioned to save in imperishable lines the vanishing masterpieces of fresco-painting[.] (320-321)

The key to this artist’s success in Peabody Hawthorne’s eyes appears to be his ‘faithfulness’, a quality that has both literal and spiritual connotations. The ideal copyist must be faithful both to the superficial appearance of the artwork, but also possess the Christian faith that was key to Peabody Hawthorne’s understanding of artistic energy and aura. In this way, Peabody Hawthorne suggests, the ideal copyist can achieve what Black argues is impossible: ‘a perfectly faithful model’ that can ‘represent its original’ without ‘being unfaithful in some respect’ (257). Peabody Hawthorne’s conception of successful artistic copying as the transmission of aura that is therefore not imitated but shared by the copy and the original allows for the ‘perfectly faithful model’ that in Black’s formulation is rendered impossible. Towards the end of *Notes*, there is another description of an ideal copyist at work:

The needle-point of his crayon effected touches as delicate as those of a graving instrument, and the light and shade were consummate. [...] The young man was thin and pale, as if he were himself four-fifths soul. [...] Oh, if he would only rescue the fading frescoes for mankind with his pencil! (479)

As in the case of the previous copyist, the success of this man’s work depends on his spirituality. He is ‘four-fifths soul’; his touch is ‘delicate,’ he is ‘thin and pale’. His physicality is repeatedly diminished in favour of an ethereal spirituality Peabody Hawthorne associates with all great artworks, and which, here, is associated with mass-productive technologies—‘photography or engraving’—which, as is discussed below, could be similarly imagined as ‘ideal’ reproductive mediators. The less

physical, earthly, corporeal interference or mediation between the original and copy, it seems, the better. An ideal copyist, this passage suggests, is barely human at all.

This focus on the slowness of the body of the ideal copyist is one maintained by Nathaniel Hawthorne in his portrait of Hilda in *The Marble Faun*, who is ‘the best copyist in Rome’ and commonly understood to be a portrait of Sophia. The Rome of *The Marble Faun*, like the Rome of *Notes in England and Italy*, is one occupied by copies and copyists of all kinds; the novel’s English title, *Transformation*, refers to this central preoccupation, emphasising the tension between continuity and change that informs the text’s discourse on copying and reproduction. The novel establishes Hilda as a counterpoint to the city’s faceless ‘Guido machines, or Raphaelic machines’. Auerbach attributes Hilda’s success as a copyist to the combined result of her internal powers of sympathy and those external masterpieces which excite her sympathy’ (108). Hilda is a pure, ideal copyist, succeeding where the many others attempting the same work fail.

Her copies were indeed marvellous. Accuracy was not the phrase for them; a Chinese copy is accurate. Hilda’s had that evanescent and ethereal life—that flitting fragrance, as it were, of the originals—which it is as difficult to catch and retain as it would be for a sculptor to get the very movement and varying color of a living man into his marble bust. Only by watching the efforts of the most skilful copyists [...] and observing how invariably they leave out just the indefinable charm that involves the last, inestimable value, can we understand the difficulties of the task which they undertake. (47)

The many terms employed to differentiate Hilda’s work from that of other copyists in this passage—‘evanescent and ethereal life’, ‘flitting fragrance’, ‘indefinable charm’, ‘inestimable value’—are all recognizable synonyms for the conception of Roman energy. Hilda is able to channel and reproduce this energy. In doing so, her process is a physical one: ‘She saw, no, not saw, but felt through and through a picture’. Hilda’s distinct lack of physicality enables this physical process:

This power and depth of appreciation depended partly upon Hilda’s physical organization, which was at once healthful and exquisitely delicate; and, connected with this advantage, she had a command of hand, a nicety and force of touch, which is an endowment separate from pictorial genius, though indispensable to its exercise. (46)

With a 'delicate' body and strong hand, Hilda is the ideal copyist. Her copying process, we are told is one of 'self-surrender', and the insubstantial quality of her body is what makes that surrender possible. Like the copyist Peabody Hawthorne admired who was 'four-fifths soul', Hilda too is almost immaterial, so that there are almost no physical obstacles, mediations or disruptions to the flow of aura between original and copy. Only her hand, which is 'separate from [...] genius', is allowed any power: its 'force of touch' is necessary for the technical execution of her craft. It is a 'tool' with which she carries out her higher purpose of copying.

In Nathaniel Hawthorne's construction of the relationship between artistic power and physicality, while the hand has no relationship to genius, the body in other ways does. When Hilda is copying, she is no longer occupying her own body, but that of the original artist: '[S]he went straight to the central point, in which the master had conceived his work. Thus she viewed it, as it were, with his own eyes, and hence her comprehension of any picture that interested her was perfect' (46). It is Hilda's lack of her own physical substance that enables her to access the bodies of the original artists, and it is by inhabiting those original bodies that she is able to channel their energy, and the artwork's aura, into her copies. The authenticity of the original body is emphasised by a focus on its impermanence: Hilda enables, 'the spirit of some great departed painter now first achieved his ideal, centuries after his own earthly hand, that other tool, had turned to dust' (48). The artist's body is the most obviously absent, lost element of the original artist, and thus the possession of it is key to Hilda's work in recreating the authentic work. Those who observe Hilda working 'felt inclined to believe that the spirits of the old masters were hovering over Hilda, and guiding her delicate white hand' (47). This describes a process of mutual possession between copyist and artist: Hilda sees with the artist's eyes; the artist, whose own hand has 'turned to dust,' in turn takes control of Hilda's. The hand is seen as the connecting link between the present and the past: it is a kind of bridging device. The relationship between Hilda's copying process and practices in spiritualism and mediumship, and particular the significance of the artist's hand in this regard, will be discussed in the next chapter. In relation to the practice of copying and energetic recycling, however, the language of reincarnation and possession of deceased bodies clearly expresses a view of Hilda's work in *The Marble Faun* as one of recycling energy from the past: she alone is able to recreate aura.

Hilda's relationship to spirits and systems of energy beyond her own body contribute to a significant distinction Nathaniel Hawthorne draws between Hilda and the other copyists of Rome. Compared to the 'Guido machines' and 'Raphaelic machines', we are told, 'Hilda was no such machine as this' (48). However, the narrative also states that 'the girl was but a finer instrument, a more exquisitely effective piece of mechanism' (48). Mike Davis relates the term 'mechanism' to 'machine' ('both are derived from a Greek for "contrivance"'), finding that

we bounce back and forth between similarity and difference. Hilda is like other copyists in that her paintings are imitations. She is unlike them in that her imitations are better. She is like them in that she is a mechanism and they are machines. But she is unlike them in that her mechanism somehow functions "religiously".<sup>85</sup>

However, understanding Hilda's place in the spiritual and energetic systems operating beyond her in the city illuminates the key difference between her role as a mechanism and the copyists' roles as machines. A mechanism is part of a system; a machine is an entire system. The copyists who are entire machines themselves are not connected to larger systems of energy and therefore they participate in the diluting process of mechanical reproduction. Hilda's capacity to connect with systems beyond herself, to function as a 'tool' for 'the spirit of some great departed painter', and to copy 'religiously', enables her to become part of a larger and more powerful system, or machine, than any individual copyist: the recycling of Roman energy (48).

Hilda's power is such that she even creates a successful copy of the portrait of Beatrice Cenci, the ubiquity of copies of which was a source of such anguish to Story and Peabody Hawthorne. The account of Hilda's process when creating her copy breaks down the procedure by which successful copying can be achieved into three distinct stages, each of which relates to energy transfer. Denied the right to copy 'directly' from the original by Prince Barberini, Hilda is forced first to memorise the portrait, then to transport that memorised version from the gallery to her own studio, and finally to create her copy from memory.

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<sup>85</sup> Mike Davis, *Reading the Text That Isn't There: Paranoia in the Nineteenth-Century American Novel* (New York & London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 48-9.

I had no resource but to sit down before the picture, day after day, and let it sink into my heart. I do believe it is now photographed there. [...] Well; after studying it in this way, I know not how many times, I came home, and have done my best to transfer the image to canvas. (52)

The 'picture' here is given an immaterial substance, so that the term becomes not a synonym for 'painting' so much as for 'aura'. It 'sinks into' Hilda's heart, a process of transfer and absorption that moves this essence, like a gas, from its original container—the painting—to a secondary one—Hilda's heart. The copyist's body is portrayed as a form of temporary storage—Hilda's moral purity and physical fragility ensuring the picture/aura is not corrupted in transit—through which the artwork passes. In the final stage the transfer is completed: the aura is successfully embedded in the canvas.

In Benjamin's description of the qualities of aura, he makes a distinction between 'transmission' and 'reproducibility'.

The authenticity of a thing is the essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning, ranging from its substantive duration to its testimony to the history which it has experienced. Since the historical testimony rests on the authenticity, the former, too, is jeopardized by reproduction when substantive duration ceases to matter. And what is really jeopardized when the historical testimony is affected is the authority of the object. (*Work of Art*, 221)

Transmission, then, is the stage in which an understanding of the artwork's aura and history reaches the viewer/copyist. Reproduction is the attempt by the copyist to create a secondary transmission, and is the point, in Benjamin's formulation, when the object is severed from its 'historical testimony'. However, in Hilda's process of copying the 'Beatrice Cenci', she successfully mediates two separate stages of transmission: from the original to her, and from her to her canvas. Rather than erasing the 'historical testimony' of the original, Hilda's process simply adds a further layer to it.

When describing this spiritual process of transfer, the metaphor Hilda chooses is a mechanical one: the portrait is 'photographed' in her heart. However, the photograph in Hilda's heart possesses none of the qualities of mass-production associated with a process from which multiple copies can be made from a single negative. Instead, it is a single, pure image that represents rather than contains the

‘aura’ of Beatrice Cenci. Victoria Mills notes a mid-century perspective on photography as ‘a transparent medium that was unimpeded by the vagaries of human agency’;<sup>86</sup> Nancy Armstrong describes in contemporary accounts of the origins of photography an emphasis on ‘the desire to fix an unmediated image of an object’.<sup>87</sup> Thus Hilda’s photography metaphor operates to reject the perceived corrupting influence of mediation that was considered, in the copying process, to lead to ‘dilution’, as described by Weld.

The history of photography was itself linked both to the desire for preservation, and specifically to the expatriate artistic world in Italy. Physicist Francois Arago, presenting ‘Daguerre’s invention of photography to the Académie des Sciences in Paris, in January 1839’ argued that ‘one of the medium’s most valuable applications would be the precise recording of antiquities’ (Szegegy-Maszak, 115). Claire L. Lyons compares the role of photography to that of archaeology, describing its ‘decisive role in the rediscovery of antiquity, particularly in the lands surrounding the Mediterranean that were keystones of Europe’s self-conception.’<sup>88</sup> Henry Talbot’s catalysing idea of ‘how charming it would be if it were possible to cause these natural images to imprint themselves durably, and remain fixed upon the camera,’ occurred to him after making use of a camera obscura, precursor to the camera, on a sketching trip in Italy in 1833, and describes the widely-shared preservative urge of expatriates in the country (Armstrong, 13). Talbot’s notion of the process of photography as an ‘imprint’ echoes Trollope’s vision of Hawthorne’s ‘receptive imagination [taking] an impress from what was around him’ in Rome.<sup>89</sup> Artists were seeking to receive, manifest, and make permanent the energy they encountered in Italy. Whereas the energy Talbot used in his photographic experiments was ‘[l]ight’, which he saw ‘exert[ing] an action [...] on the paper’, the artistic energy

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<sup>86</sup> Victoria Mills, ‘Photography, Travel Writing and Tactile Tourism: Extra-illustrating *The Marble Faun*’ in *Travel Writing, Visual Culture and Form, 1760-1900*, pp. 65-86 (p. 68).

<sup>87</sup> Nancy Armstrong, *Fiction in the Age of Photography: The Legacy of British Realism* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 10. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>88</sup> Claire L. Lyons, ‘The Art and Science of Antiquity in Nineteenth-Century Photography’, in *Antiquity & Photography: Early Views of Ancient Mediterranean Sites*, pp. 22-65 (p. 24).

<sup>89</sup> Anthony Trollope, ‘The Genius of Nathaniel Hawthorne’, *North American Review*, No. 274, September, 1879, pp. 204-222 (p. 222).



of Rome in expatriate accounts figured in various metaphors (light, fire, music, perfume) that related to 'aura', but these conceptions similarly assumed an active role in relation to the artist by 'topping from below' (Armstrong, 13). Weld himself advises visitors to support the 'good work' of excavations in Rome 'by purchasing photographs of the frescoes from carefully executed drawings,' thereby aligning the preservative role of photography played in the recycling of Roman energy with the parallel circulation of money through the city (107).

As technologies of photography progressed and 'the glass negative allowed for cheaper formats, greater efficiency and wider circulation', Daniel Novak notes that '[s]tudios came to resemble factories',<sup>90</sup> much as Rome with its 'mechanical' copyists and marble cutters did to critical expatriate visitors. As with these other modes of reproduction, photography occupied an ambivalent position between conservation and dilution: the art of photography, 'favoured by a pure atmosphere, is practised in Rome with great success' reported Weld; 'But let the visitor be on his guard respecting the photographs professing to be taken from pictures. In Roman picture galleries a system has sprung up of foisting photographs on visitors, which the custode insists were taken from original pictures, whereas in almost all cases they are copies of engravings' (393). Again, here, Weld's concern is the 'diluting process' of copying, from which photography is not exempt.

However, Armstrong considers photography one of 'the distinguishing features of the modern city [that] are forms of circulation, that transform one thing into another. [...] Like everything else in this process, photography was at once a cause and an effect, a means and an object of circulation' (90). Photography is a mediator, a messenger and a thing. Jonathan Crary credits the advent of photography with creating 'a new type of observer [...] produced by a new set of relations between the body, technology, and forms of institutional and discursive power that emerged in the early nineteenth century, through which the subject became 'visible':<sup>91</sup> Hilda, as a 'photographic' and 'spiritual' copyist embodies this new observer navigating technological and spiritual realities to produce a new kind of work: while Crary relates

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<sup>90</sup> Daniel Novak, *Realism, Photography, and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 9. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>91</sup> Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), p. 16.

these developments to the rise of Impressionism, the ‘spiritual copying’ of Hilda is a product of the same conditions.

The projects of ‘spiritual copying’ and photography shared an irony regarding their relationship to mediation: while they indulged in a ‘fantasy for making apparently unmediated copies’, both acted as highly effective mediators that aided mass production and distribution of images (Armstrong, 14). This, however, was a process that complicated the notion that mass production causes the inevitable destruction of aura. Benjamin notes that, in early photography the cult value of art ‘retires into an ultimate retrenchment: the human countenance’.

It is no accident that the portrait was the focal point of early photography. The cult of remembrance of loved ones, absent or dead, offers a last refuge for the cult value of the picture. For the last time the aura emanates from the early photographs in the fleeting expression of a human face. (*The Work of Art*, 226)

Roman travel narratives’ ecstatic descriptions of the original portrait of Beatrice Cenci focused on the skill with which the character and emotional state of Beatrice herself is captured, as in Peabody Hawthorne’s comparison between the copies’ ‘merely external signs of sorrow’ and the original’s ‘infinite desolation’ (213). The original portrait, then, is twice-imbued with ‘cult value’ in Benjamin’s terms: that associated with Guido and the idea of his authority as original artist, and that related to the ‘human countenance’ and value of the historical figure of Beatrice Cenci. Hilda, ideal copyist, is able to transfer both—spiritually and photographically—with her capacity to act as a medium, absorbing aura and surrendering herself. Novak argues that the ‘aura’ Benjamin sees in ‘early photography’ in fact extends throughout the history of nineteenth-century photography, finding ‘a less familiar story than that offered by Roland Barthes’s focus on [...] the frozen moment, death, and the “that-has-been-there” of photographic historicity. Instead [...] photographic bodies do not represent the visual residue of history, but rather form the raw material of new photographic and fictional narratives’ (13-14). This is evidenced in Hilda’s ‘photographic’ phase in copying the *Beatrice Cenci*, which is posited as both a pure mediation and ‘the raw material’ of her own work.

Despite her abilities as a spiritual mediator, by the end of the novel, Hilda’s capacity for copying is compromised: ‘Her character had developed a sturdier quality,

which made her less pliable to the influence of other minds'. As a result of this new 'sturdiness', it is 'questionable whether she was ever so perfect a copyist thenceforth' (291). Hilda is changed not only by her expanded understanding of human sin, having witnessed Miriam and Donatello's murder of the Model, but also by her acceptance of Kenyon's love: human, physical love as opposed to the pious religious version she espouses for the greater part of the narrative. In the process of accepting a romantic relationship with Kenyon, Hilda is transformed from copy to original. During their separation, Kenyon experiences his love for Hilda as 'a strange pull at his heart-strings',

But lovers, and Kenyon knew it well, project so lifelike a copy of their mistresses out of their own imaginations, that it can pull at the heartstrings almost as perceptibly as the genuine original. No airy intimations are to be trusted; no evidences of responsive affection less positive than whispered and broken words, or tender pressures of the hand, allowed and half returned [...]. (205)

Hilda, before Kenyon 'wins' her, exists, both in Kenyon's imagination and in that of the narrative itself, as an 'airy imitation' of the original woman; the 'exquisitely delicate' physical form that enables her copying is revealed now as a consequence of her unrealness. Only her 'force of touch, which is an endowment separate from pictorial genius,' is consistent between the copied and original Hildas, to be transformed, weakened, into 'half returned' 'tender pressures of the hand'. The division between real and imaginary love objects is emphasized during the scene in which Kenyon discovers the buried *Venus*, exclaiming, 'I seek for Hilda, and find a marble woman!' (329). The final emergence of the real, embodied Hilda figures as a resurrection: a statue, an 'imitation', coming to life. Her transformation is described as a descent: 'Hilda was coming down from her old tower, to be herself enshrined and worshipped as a household saint' (357). As an original, she acquires her own religious cult value.

Though losing her own recycling abilities as a copyist, Hilda's resurrection from copy to original marks, in the novel's own structure, the cycle of energy coming full circle. The final stage of Hilda's realization is her return with Kenyon to America. The couple 'resolved to go back to their own land; because the years, after all, have a kind of emptiness, when we spend too many of them on a foreign shore. We defer the reality of life, in such cases, until a future moment' (357). Hilda and Kenyon leave

the 'pictorial land' of Italy, and the 'fairy precinct' of Rome, for the 'reality of life' in their homeland. Their return to America is the closure of another circle; the recycling patterns of Rome echo outwards on the grand scale of the characters' transatlantic journey from the new to old world and back again.

After drawing to a close the cycle of the travel narrative, the novel turns, in its final image, to a smaller circular image that encapsulates the many forms of Roman recycling explored in the text: the 'bridal gift [...] laid on Hilda's table.'

It was a bracelet, evidently of great cost, being composed of seven ancient Etruscan gems, dug out of seven sepulchres, and each one of them the signet of some princely personage, who had lived an immemorial time ago. *Hilda remembered this precious ornament.* It had been Miriam's; and once, with the exuberance of fancy that distinguished her, she had amused herself with telling a mythical and magic legend for each gem [...]. Thus the Etruscan bracelet became the *connecting bond* of a series of seven wondrous tales, all of which, as they were *dug out* of seven sepulchres, were characterized by a sevenfold sepulchral gloom; such as Miriam's imagination, shadowed by her own misfortunes, was wont to fling over its most sportive flights. And now, happy as Hilda was, the bracelet brought the tears into her eyes, as being, *in its entire circle, the symbol of as sad a mystery as any that Miriam had attached to the separate gems.* (358)  
[My emphasis]

The 'connecting bond' of the bracelet's 'entire circle' brings the energy from an 'immemorial time ago' into play in the present. The bracelet's gems, mined from the richly historical Roman soil, release artistic energy that Miriam converts into 'mythical and magic legend[s]' that in turn materialize into 'as sad a mystery as any that Miriam' had imagined. Robert K. Martin reads the bracelet as a sign that 'there will always be a residue of the past incorporated in the self. Rome's layered history is a sign of the impossibility of origins. There can be only repetition' (32-3). While Martin finds that this suggests 'a return to America, in symbolic terms at least' is impossible, it in fact indicates the opposite: the characters must return to their place of origin in order to conform to the endless cycles indicated by the bracelet. The object, containing the multiple histories of ancient and contemporary Rome, sparks in Hilda the powerful recognition unique to Roman objects: an understanding of the circularity of Roman energy and time.

## Locating the ‘Spiritual’ in Print Culture: Tauchnitz Editions of *The Marble Faun*

Just as the narrative of *The Marble Faun* is shaped by these ideas of copying, circularity and recycling energy, so too is that of the physical books’ distribution and the experience of the novel’s readers. Julian Hawthorne wrote that *The Marble Faun* was ‘perhaps the most widely read of all Hawthorne’s works owing to its extensive circulation in Rome in the Tauchnitz edition.’<sup>92</sup> These editions included blank pages onto which readers could paste photographs relevant to each particular section of the story; the images were usually purchased in sets designed for the purpose, which were sold by booksellers throughout Rome and Florence (Mills, 65). The editions encouraged readers to engage actively with the text in the role of copyists, not only by purchasing photographed copies of artworks to paste into their books, but by creating the doubling effect of juxtaposing a textual description of an artwork with a visual one. The novel’s opening description of the Faun of Praxiteles is frequently accompanied by an image of the statue. Similarly, the section in which material from Hawthorne’s notebooks detailing the excavation of the Porta Portese Venus is repurposed in Kenyon’s discovery of a new Venus whose ‘long-buried hands immediately disposed themselves in the manner that [...] all the world has seen, in the Venus de Medici’ appears alongside the Venus de Medici’s photograph (329).

This pattern of copying occurs on yet another level in the readers’ production of completed copies of the book. Susan S. Williams, referring to Henry James’ description of *The Marble Faun* as ‘part of the intellectual equipment of the Anglo-Saxon visitor to Rome’, argues that ‘it was a piece manufactured not only by Tauchnitz and his Italian booksellers but also by the readers’.<sup>93</sup> However, for Williams, the extra-illustrated copies are ‘particularly fascinating because each is distinct; no two contain exactly the same group or number of photographs’ (124). She notes that ‘[t]o own *The Marble Faun*, in these cases, was also to help create its form’

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<sup>92</sup> Julian Hawthorne, *Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife*, Vol. 2 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1897), p. 171.

<sup>93</sup> Susan S. Williams, ‘Manufacturing Intellectual Equipment: The Tauchnitz Edition of *The Marble Faun*’, in *Reading Books: Essays on the Material Text and Literature in America*, ed. by Michele Moylan and Lane Stiles (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), pp. 117-150 (p. 145). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

(142). In Williams' view, the readers pasting in their own selected images are engaging in a creative act. Shelly Jarenski, by contrast, finds that 'there is remarkably little variation among the different extra-illustrated editions of *The Marble Faun*': 'there are very clear patterns that governed the choices made by reader-travellers when they selected the images for their texts that point more toward a certain cultural script that structured travel as well as the representation of travel.'<sup>94</sup> In Jarenski's view, the owners of Tauchnitz editions are cast as 'mechanical' copyists, following a 'cultural script' that results in homogeneous copies of the same text.

The tension between similarity and difference in the readers' Tauchnitz editions that sparks the divergence of opinion between Jarenski and Williams, echoes Hawthorne's anxieties regarding copying that are expressed in the novel itself. In creating versions of *The Marble Faun* that were, as Jarenski finds, extremely formulaic, but which, as Williams observes, remained subtly different nonetheless, Tauchnitz readers created what in Hawthorne's view were perfect copies. It is this same balance between similarity and difference that sets Hilda's 'marvellous' copies apart in the novel: 'she had been enabled to execute what the great master had conceived in his imagination, but had not so perfectly succeeded in putting upon canvas' (47). The effect both of Hilda's copies and the extra-illustrated Tauchnitz editions is a form of amplification derived from a spiritual collaboration between the original artist and the copyist. Just as Peabody Hawthorne attempted to 'increase the visual intensity of Italian art so that her audience might appreciate its value' in her descriptions of artworks in *Notes in England and Italy*, the Tauchnitz readers' copies are *more* meaningful than the original because they place the reader in such close sympathy with the author that they are able to channel additional energy into the book (Formichella Elsdon, 77). This exact balance of sameness and difference—same text, same blank pages, for the most part same photographs, but enough room for individual choices relating to the selection and ordering of images, and their positioning on the page—is what encourages in the reader a sense of collaboration with the author and thus enables a perpetuation of energy.

The incompleteness of the Tauchnitz editions, with their blank pages, was an invitation to readers to participate in the perpetual cycle of artistic energy in Rome.

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<sup>94</sup> Shelly Jarenski, *Immersive Words: Mass Media, Visuality, and American Literature, 1839-1893* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2015), p. 131.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, after having seen Story's *Cleopatra* as a work in progress in Story's studio, had considered the allure of the unfinished artwork in his *Notebooks*: 'I do not know whether there is some magic in the present imperfect finish of the statue, or in the material of clay' (509). The 'material of clay', as opposed to the rigidity of marble, not only has the authority of the artist's own touch upon it, but also has the potential for further change; the unfinished artwork suggests to the viewer stored energy and the possibility of release. By completing texts that were mass-produced by Tauchnitz in suggestive incompleteness, readers participated in the perpetuation of the living, energetic narrative.

The practice of readers inserting their own images into the Tauchnitz editions did not begin until 1868, four years after Hawthorne's death. Williams notes that the inclusion of 'anachronistic' images in Tauchnitz books, such as 'a photograph of an Italian senator that has been dated to 1865 [...] show that the material book must always be tied to the historical moment in which it is produced, while romance itself can aspire to be an ahistorical "fairy precinct"' (138). The 'ahistorical' precinct of the romance suggested by the readers' anachronistic additions as they participated in the creation of the book is itself an 'afterlife' for the novel. The extra-illustrated books function in relation to Hawthorne's text much in the manner of Benjamin's conception of the relationship between translations and source texts.

Awareness in Tauchnitz readers of their participation in this perpetuation of energy into an 'ahistorical' 'afterlife' is demonstrated by the appearance, in multiple copies, of a photograph of clasped living hands included in the section of the novel that discusses Kenyon's sculpture of a 'small, beautifully shaped hand' based on Hilda's. The hand possesses such 'delicate energy' that viewers 'could hardly believe that a virgin warmth would not steal from' its fingers (94). In multiple extra-illustrated Tauchnitz editions, the inclusion of an image of clasped, female, living hands here, as opposed to a photograph of sculpture, is a notable departure from the practice exercised at other points in the text (Fig. 2). Just as the *Venus de Medici* appears alongside a description of a statue that is compared to it, so too would it be reasonable to expect either an image of Hosmer's cast of the Brownings' hands, or Powers' cast of his daughter's, both of which are mentioned as comparisons to Kenyon's sculpture in the novel. The images of living hands, here, are an acknowledgement of the role of the reader in contributing to the text: it is a process that continues cycles of energy, between the text and the reader, and also between the text (art) and its subject (life).

In this way, the cycle of artistic energy comes, again, full circle: inspiration, drawn from the city of Rome in order to create art, is returned to the living city. This pattern of resurrection through art, the transfer of energy from art to life, will be discussed in relation to spiritualist practices in Rome in the next chapter, with particular reference to the significance of artists' and mediums' hands.



2 Albumen print tipped into p. 142 of Tauchnitz edition of *Transformation*, 1860



### Chapter Three

#### Rome the Séance: Un-dead artists and the rejection of loss

*All England may, if it so chooses, become one manufacturing town; and Englishmen, sacrificing themselves to the good of general humanity, may live diminished lives in the midst of noise, of darkness, and of deadly exhalation. But the world cannot become a factory nor a mine. No amount of ingenuity will ever make iron digestible by the million, nor substitute hydrogen for wine.*

John Ruskin, *Unto This Last*<sup>1</sup>

*Sometimes I think there is nothing forgotten, only temporarily obscured, and that hereafter all will come forth clearly, and stand out in the light, that it is with the mind as with the photographic plate before it is developed—the image is really there, though dark and invisible, and only needs the developing medium to appear before us.*

William Wetmore Story, *Conversations in a Studio*<sup>2</sup>

#### I. ‘BE EARNEST’: SPIRITUALISM, ARTISTIC PRACTICE AND ROMAN ENTROPY

##### ‘A distinct Romeward trend’: Transatlantic Spiritualism in Rome

‘Sometimes I think there is nothing forgotten,’ says the critic character Belton in Story’s *Conversations in a Studio*. Rather, ‘it is with the mind as with the photographic plate before it is developed—the image is really there, though dark and invisible, and only needs the developing medium to appear before us’ (451). Belton’s meditation on loss is poignantly positioned in the broader context of Story’s *Conversations*, in which Belton and Mallet, the narrative’s only characters, are never shown beyond the confines of the studio itself. The walls of the studio contain the narrative; the room insulates the men and the content of their conversations from intrusion from—and loss to—the outside world. *Conversations* creates a microcosmic closed system in which nothing is lost: Belton and Mallet’s words are recorded and contained within the twin frameworks of the studio and the text. Belton’s assertion,

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<sup>1</sup> John Ruskin, ‘Ad Valorem’, *Unto this Last: & Other Essays on Art and Political Economy* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1907), pp. 84-128 (123).

<sup>2</sup> William Wetmore Story, *Conversations in a Studio* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1890), p. 451. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

therefore, that ‘there is nothing forgotten’ is, like the text itself, a reaction to the undeniable fact that much *is* forgotten, that the walls of the artist’s studio are not as impermeable as the text suggests.

Belton’s voice joins those of other mid- to late century artists and critics who were preoccupied with bringing the ‘dark and invisible’ back ‘out in the light’ (451). This was the motivation behind the practices of expatriates’ archaeological digs and stories explored in Chapter One, and the copying and repetition of Roman art described in Chapter Two. James’ Roderick Hudson expresses a similar wish to Belton’s when he says, ‘The thing that there was is the thing that I want to bring back’ (117). In the cases discussed in the previous chapters, however, the ‘dark and invisible’ thing being brought to light undeniably existed before it was revealed; the artworks lying beneath Rome’s surface, subsequently uncovered and copied by expatriate artists, were relatively easy to access once the appropriate mediating archaeological technologies were available. Belton here describes a further, more intricate form of mediation that can reveal the existence of ‘things’ invisible to the human eye. The process of developing photographs—revealing images from an apparently blank plate—was suggestive of access to other invisible things: lost memories, in Belton’s analogy, but also lost time, lost lives and lost energy. As Benjamin describes, ‘technical reproduction can put the copy of the original in situations which would be out of reach for the original itself [...] it enables the original to meet the beholder halfway’ (220). Belton’s metaphor is as much an evocation of the spiritualist séance that summons spirits to ‘meet the recipient halfway’ from the afterlife as it is of the photographer’s dark room.

While Lindsay Smith argues that ‘[p]hotography works like sculpture of the human form to petrify an instant’, it operates here not as a fossilising fact, but as a mediating process.<sup>3</sup> While Rome’s expatriate artists of the mid century used sculpture to contain energy, they envisioned photography as a medium for access rather than a storage device. In *Casa Guidi Windows*, for example, Helen Groth finds that the imagery of photography functions for Barrett Browning both ‘as a visualization of the essence of a moment and her interrogation of the fraught relation between vision and memory’;

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<sup>3</sup> Lindsay Smith, ‘The Wont of Photography, or the Pleasure of Mimesis’, in *Illustrations, Optics and Objects in Nineteenth-Century Literary and Visual Cultures*, pp. 65-86 (p. 84).

‘photography was a paradoxical incarnation of the troubled relation between the past and the present.’<sup>4</sup> Groth observes the imagery of light ‘fracturing visual planes and loosening the eye’s hold on the difference between semblance and reality’;<sup>5</sup> thus photography, or ‘light drawing’, is presented as a form of access to both ‘memory’ and ‘semblance’. Isobel Armstrong notes that in Browning’s ‘Mesmerism’, in which the speaker ‘imprint[s] [his eroticized mesmeric subject] fast / On the void at last / As the sun does whom he will / By the calotypist’s skill’,<sup>6</sup> the image of the photograph ‘takes fixed but ephemeral, at most provisional, form’;<sup>7</sup> in drawing together the processes of photography and mesmerism, Browning indicates photography’s role as a process of access, rather than a ‘petrified’ form.

Nancy Armstrong argues via Roland Barthes that ‘[t]o look at a photograph is to know that the figure and ground within the image no longer exist outside its frame. Because object and image parted ways and began to pursue entirely different histories the moment the photograph was taken, the photographic subject can no longer exist as it was represented’ (174). Thus the photograph is at once a vehicle of preservative revelation and a depiction of absence. The tension between energy and entropy explored throughout this thesis again appears in Belton’s metaphor: in this case, the only way of ‘to bring back’ ‘the thing that was’ is to capture it in a process that defines its very loss. As Armstrong notes in a discussion of spirit photography: the notion of the ghost ‘turns something old (a body) into something entirely new (the spirit body) by representing that thing (or body) as something that is no longer there (namely, a real human being)’ (175). In this context, Crary’s ‘new type of observer’ as a product of the new visual technologies of the nineteenth century can be read not only as a ‘spiritual copyist’ as discussed in the previous chapter, but also as a spiritualist.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Helen Groth, ‘Consigned to Sepia: Remembering Victorian Poetry’, *Victorian Poetry* 41, no. 4 (2003), pp. 611-20 (p. 616).

<sup>5</sup> Helen Groth, *Victorian Photography and Literary Nostalgia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 124.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Browning, ‘Mesmerism’, *The Poems of Robert Browning*, Vol. 3, ed. by John Woolford, Daniel Karlin and Joseph Phelan (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 491.

<sup>7</sup> Isobel Armstrong, ‘Casa Guidi Windows: spectacle and politics in 1851’, in *Unfolding the South*, pp. 51-69 (p. 61).

<sup>8</sup> Heather Tilley, ‘Introduction’, *The Victorian Tactile Imagination 19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 19 (2014), p. 2. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

This chapter explores how anxiety amongst the expatriate artistic community in Rome regarding the loss or entropy of the city's artistic energy related to the practice of and engagement with spiritualism amongst its members. Tatiana Kontou and Sarah Willburn state that spiritualism 'sought to make the spiritual world visible, scientifically proven and technologically advanced, resulting in overcoming death, distances, and socio-economic, racial and gendered differences'.<sup>9</sup> Just as Belton describes the blank image of the photographic plate revealing a previously unseen image, spiritualism held that the lost people and energy of the past similarly required only the correct 'developing medium' in order 'to appear before us'. Mallet's response to Belton's analogy leads the metaphor more distinctly into the realm of spiritualism: 'Sometimes, in response to our repeated calls, what we seek seems at last slowly and unwillingly to rise out of some blank void beyond our reach, and gradually to take distinct shape' (450). This is a materialization. The personified memory is imbued with human emotions: it 'unwillingly' takes shape, assumes a form. This is the language of the séance, echoing popular contemporary accounts of spirit materializations, such as Robert Dale Owen's description of an apparition during a séance with the famous medium Leah Fox:

After a few minutes I perceived a light apparently of a phosphorescent character, on my left, near the door. [...] After a time it changed its appearance and increased in brightness. [...] As it approached, I plainly distinguished the semi-luminous outline of an entire figure [...].<sup>10</sup>

Owen's apparition, like Mallet's reluctant memory, is summoned by a medium and materializes, gradually, into a manifestation of energy that refutes the idea that anything is ever permanently lost.

The anti-entropic workings of spiritualism were particularly attractive to the expatriate artist residents of Rome, whose ability to recycle Roman energy and

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<sup>9</sup> Tatiana Kontou and Sarah Willburn, 'Introduction' to *The Ashgate Research Companion to Nineteenth-Century Spiritualism and the Occult*, ed. by Tatiana Kontou and Sarah Willburn (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Dale Owen, *The Debatable Land Between This World and the Next* (New York: G. W. Carleton & Co., 1872), pp. 461-2. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

participate in its continuous circulating flow by creating their own artworks relied on an unwavering supply. The evident decay in the city, whose ruins often overwhelmed and 'ruined' the tourists who viewed them, heightened interest in practices not only of preserving energy, as discussed in relation to copying in the previous chapter, but also in the possibility of restoring or recalling it, as was promised by spiritualism. The first section of this chapter examines Rome's significance to transatlantic spiritualism, and the spiritualist practices carried out by key members of the expatriate community, notably William Wetmore Story, Harriet Hosmer, Hiram Powers and the Brownings. The chapter then explores the ways expatriate artists linked their spiritualist beliefs to their ideas regarding artistic energy in response to Roman entropy. Spiritualism itself drew heavily on scientific language and theories of energy; spiritualists believed energy moved and manifested itself in their séances in the same way as expatriate artists understood artistic energy to operate in Rome. Thus expatriate artists were able to use spiritualism to interrupt the entropy of Roman artistic energy. Practised in this way, spiritualism denied the death not only of humans but also of the artistic energy upon which they relied for the creation of their art. The art they produced reflected the specifically artistic brand of spiritualism that was practiced in Rome. The final section considers how the blurred distinction between the role of the medium and that of the artist elevated the artwork to the level of the apport: a materialisation with its own distinctly spiritual energy. The myth of Pygmalion and Galatea informed works of spiritualist art that aimed not only to recycle energy but reverse entropy by imbuing 'life' into their art. By assuming the role of artistic mediums who had unique access to Roman artistic energy, artists were able to protect their distinct authority in an age of mechanized reproduction and increasing anxiety about the possibility and nature of 'original' work.

The rise of spiritualism's popularity both in America and Britain corresponded with the period of rapid growth in Rome's expatriate artistic community. The beginnings of spiritualism are traceable to the 'Rochester Rappings' that occurred at the home of the Fox sisters in March 1848, although the movement grew out of Swedenborg's mystic philosophy and the already well-established, and less controversial, practice of mesmerism (Colbert, 3). The idea established by mesmerism that a 'universal magnetic fluid' could be manipulated by a mesmerist to influence, heal or control subjects, was translated into spiritualism, 'the difference being that the

spirits rather than the mesmerist now activated the magnetic fluid'.<sup>11</sup> Katherine H. Porter describes how the 'transfer' from mesmerism to spiritualism 'carried with it both the opprobrium attached to mesmerism and the theory that table-turning, once attributed to animal magnetism, was really due to some spirit agency.'<sup>12</sup> Spiritualism, therefore, was not primarily concerned with either the purpose of healing or of entertainment as mesmerism was; rather, it set out to demonstrate 'that the so-called dead are still alive; that our friends are still with us, though unseen, and guide and strengthen us'.<sup>13</sup> Spiritualism's rejection of loss was considered by many to be, in the words of the bereaved father who wrote a book detailing the 'spirit drawings' performed during séances by his dead son, 'too beautiful a thought not to be a true one'.<sup>14</sup> By 1851, a conference of spiritualists had convened in New York; the following year, American medium Maria Hayden travelled to London and began holding séances there. In London, mesmerism had become widely understood and 'assimilated into several major intellectual enterprises' in the 1840s (Winter, 5). This provided a secure foundation on which spiritualism could build, so that by 'the spring of 1855, séances and spiritual rappings ran rampant in the well-to-do and stately homes of England.'<sup>15</sup> By 1857, the first British spiritualist newspaper, *The Yorkshire Spiritualist Telegraph*, was published;<sup>16</sup> in 1864 American spiritualists held 'their first national gathering' (Colbert, 3). The establishment and ensuing popularity of spiritualism in Britain served to bolster the claims made by American spiritualists,

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<sup>11</sup> Howard Kerr, *Mediums, and Spirit-Rappers, and Roaring Radicals: Spiritualism in American Literature, 1850-1900* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1972), p. 6. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>12</sup> Katherine H. Porter, *Through a Glass Darkly: Spiritualism in the Browning Circle* (New York: Octagon Books, 1972), p. 9. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>13</sup> Alfred Russell Wallace, *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism* (London: George Redway, 1896), p. 220. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text as A. Wallace.

<sup>14</sup> W. M. Wilkinson, *Spirit Drawings: A Personal Narrative* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1858), p. 39.

<sup>15</sup> Julia Markus, *Dared and Done: The Marriage of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), p. 219. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>16</sup> Georgina Byrne, *Modern Spiritualism and the Church of England, 1850-1939* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2010), p. 20.

who cited the appearance of phenomena in multiple countries as evidence of their authenticity (A. Wallace, 81).

As American spiritualists brought spiritualism to Britain, American artists were joining the already-established colony of English artists in Rome in large numbers: the American population in Rome rose from four to 400 between 1847 and 1859.<sup>17</sup> Many Americans came to Rome having previously been exposed to spiritualist practice and thought. Before moving to Italy, Story had been a member of the First Church of Humanity in Boston, an organisation with links to both mesmerism and spiritualism, and which held its meetings in the presence of an empty chair ‘to symbolize “the Invisible Presence”’ (Colbert, 62). Hosmer had studied anatomy with Dr Joseph Nash McDowell in St. Louis, a man ‘well known in Spiritualist circles for having wielded the scalpel in an attempt to discover evidence of the soul within the body’s viscera’ (Colbert, 62). Hiram Powers, who also studied with Nash, had been a Swedenborgian since the 1820s (Colbert, 36). Spiritualism and the expatriate community in Rome were both transatlantic phenomena of the mid century, and spiritualism was, therefore, commonly understood by the British and American residents of ‘the Eternal City’, which was already uniquely associated with concerns of history and time. ‘Spiritualism and its paraphernalia,’ writes Alison Chapman, ‘was part of the social intercourse of the Anglo-American expatriate community throughout Europe.’<sup>18</sup>

Chapman’s study of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s spiritualism identifies Florence as a site of ‘particularly vibrant and controversial [spiritualism] thanks to the enthusiasm of expatriates such as Seymour Kirkup, Frederick Tennyson and William Wetmore Story’ (77). The vogue for spiritualism in Florence was bolstered by the nearby presence of American expatriates, Story included, who resided in Rome: the American art critic James Jackson Jarves and the American artist J. R. Tilton, who lived in Rome, were responsible for sending the Brownings ‘such an explosive account of [the spiritual medium Daniel Dunglas Home]’s power that in Florence for weeks nothing else but the letter was [discussed]’ (Markus, 221). In Rome in 1853, the Brownings’ apartment on the Via Bocca di Leone was directly above that of

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<sup>17</sup> See *The Roman Advertiser: A Journal of Science, Literature and Fine Arts*, 6 Feb 1847, p. 124, and William L. Vance, *America’s Rome*, Vol. 2, p. 269.

<sup>18</sup> Alison Chapman, ‘Risorgimenti: spiritualism, politics and Elizabeth Barrett Browning,’ *Unfolding the South*, pp. 70-89 (p. 77).

American painter William Page, who ‘would come upstairs and [...] talk about spiritualism’ (Markus, 197). Spiritualist practice in the two cities was closely linked, as Barrett Browning’s correspondence reflects: the medium Mrs. Shaw, she writes, had ‘just come from Rome’, bringing ‘copies of the mystical papers produced at Rome’;<sup>19</sup> a séance held at Lucca with the Storys who were returning to Rome led Barrett Browning to resolve: ‘We are to try these things at Florence, it is agreed’.<sup>20</sup> Florence and Rome functioned as touchstones for transatlantic dialogue about spiritualism and thus consolidated spiritualism as a transatlantic phenomenon. Furthermore, spiritualism provided the lexicon by which British and American artists discussed and created a unique form of transatlantic art.

Unlike Florence, however, Rome’s function as a focal point for transatlantic spiritualism was intimately related to its position as the home of Catholicism. The relationship between Roman things perceived as energetically powerful and holy Catholic relics, explored in the first chapter, was strengthened further by spiritualism that was inspired by and drew from broader Catholic traditions and practices. As Colbert notes, there was an ‘affinity between Spiritualist attitudes toward art and those of Catholicism’ (59). The relationship between spiritualism and Roman Catholicism developed into an unbalanced discourse in which spiritualists with no Catholic background drew links between the two religions, to the extent that Italy, and Rome in particular, represented to them a kind of spiritualist homeland, and the Catholic Church condemned, exiled and excommunicated spiritualists. Robert Kugelman attributes the ‘jaundiced eye’ with which the Church viewed spiritualist claims to the fact that within spiritualist practice spirits ‘could be approached without the assistance of the Church’, thereby sidestepping its authority.<sup>21</sup> The spiritualist medium D. D. Home, who himself converted to Catholicism,<sup>22</sup> was famously expelled from Rome

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<sup>19</sup> Barrett Browning to Arabella Moulton-Barrett, 12-14 November 1853, *The Brownings’ Correspondence, Volume 19*, ed. by Philip Kelley, Scott Lewis, Edward Hagan (Winfield: Wedgestone Press, 2012) pp. 333–342 (p. 334). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>20</sup> Barrett Browning to George Goodin Moulton-Barrett, 7-8 October 1853, *The Brownings’ Correspondence, Volume 19*, pp. 311–316 (p. 312).

<sup>21</sup> Robert Kugelman, *Psychology and Catholicism: Contested Boundaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 126.

<sup>22</sup> Daniel Dunglas Home, *Incidents in My Life* (New York: A. J. Davis & Co., 1864), p. 137. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.



for refusing to cease contact with spirits.<sup>23</sup> Weld, describing the incident, again attributed this to the threat posed by spiritualism to the authority of the Church, asking ‘How could a government like that of the Pope’s, professing to be at the head of Christianity, permit a person to remain under the shadow of St. Peter’s who [...] had the power of floating in the air!’ (177). Herbert Thurston’s essay ‘Catholicism and the Early Spiritualists’, which examines the relationship between the two movements in the mid-nineteenth century from a distinctly Catholic perspective, argues that the conclusion that spiritual manifestations were ‘real and made by invisible beings is scarcely questionable’ but attributes spiritualist phenomena to ‘devils, or damned spirits’.<sup>24</sup>

Despite Catholicism’s animosity towards spiritualism, Thurston acknowledged that, ‘owing possibly to such well-known Catholic tenets as the belief in miracles, in purgatory and in the revelations made to holy people—there was a distinct Romeward trend’ amongst early spiritualists (289). Harriet Hosmer reported one of these Roman ‘miracles’ in 1854: ‘They are making a great noise in Rome now about a miracle working *da se*, in a picture of the Crucifixion. The eyes are seen to open and shut, at least by the faithful’ (Carr, 51). (The frequency with which Catholic statues were found to ‘wink, beckon, sweat, bleed, cry, sing, speak, and perform various other wonders’, was naturally of particular interest to spiritualist expatriate artists, and relates to the cultural significance within the expatriate community of the Pygmalion myth, which is discussed at the end of this chapter (Ziolkowski, 22).) To Arthur Conan Doyle, Italy was ‘superior to all other European states in its treatment of Spiritualism’: ‘The Acta Sanctorum are one long chronicle of psychic phenomena with levitations, apports, prophecy, and all the other signs of mediumistic power.’<sup>25</sup> For Alfred Russell Wallace, ‘The Church of Rome has ever been the great theatre of miracles, whether ancient or modern’ (22). *The Spiritual Magazine* drew direct comparisons between the feats of D. D. Home and the miracles of the Catholic saints:

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<sup>23</sup> See description of the expulsion of Home in Home, *Incidents in My Life*, pp. 70-71.

<sup>24</sup> Herbert Thurston, ‘Catholicism and the Early Spiritualists’, *The Month*, Vol. 143, No. 718, April 1924, pp. 289-299 (p 294). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>25</sup> Arthur Conan Doyle, *The History of Spiritualism* (London: Cassell, 1926), Vol. 2, p. 214. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

‘Mr. Home is raised in the air, so were St. Francis, and St. Ignatius Loyola, and so was St. Theresa in the great square of St. Peter’s in the presence of the Pope and assembled Rome. There is not one of the manifestations common to Mr. Home, but are to be seen fifty times repeated in the lives accredited by the church’.<sup>26</sup> Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s ‘orthodox sister feared that Swedenborgianism was leading [Barrett Browning] straight to the Pope, and that spiritualism was learning her straight to the Devil or the madhouse’ (Porter, 56).

Spiritualism was highly suggestive of Catholicism to those whose religious background lay outside the Catholic Church. Robert C. Fuller attributes the ‘Romeward trend’ of spiritualists to the fact that spiritualism offered ‘greater spiritual comfort’ because of its ‘belief in the existence of spirit guides who take a personal interest in our lives (and who are in a position to mediate on our behalf)’: ‘American Protestants [...] stood alone before a remote, wrathful god. They had to face life’s rigors without the consolation that Catholics found when they sought intercession from the quasi-human personages of Mary and the saints.’<sup>27</sup> Spiritualism offered the mediation between ‘matter’ and ‘spirit’ that Protestants perceived already existed in Catholicism, and which echoed their relationship to Roman things that were both thoughts, things, and the mediating middle quality between the two. When Protestant Hilda attends confession in *The Marble Faun* the scene is represented as a form of séance in which the confessor is attributed, by Hilda at least, with powers of clairvoyance: within the ‘mystic room’ of the confessional, the ‘mild, calm voice’ of a priest she is unable to see ‘acted like magnetism’ upon Hilda so as to suggest ‘that he was already acquainted with some outline of what she strove to tell him’ (277). And within séances themselves, the ‘mediators’ were equally prone to a ‘Romeward trend’: Thurston describes a séance in which ‘one of the most remarkable *media* in answer to a question “which religion was the true one?” answered—“None are perfect, but the Roman Catholic Church is nearest to the truth”’ (289).

Though spiritualists were drawn to Rome as the ‘great theatre of miracles’, many expatriate spiritualists maintained Protestant disdain for the Catholic Church, which was sharpened by their dismay in what was perceived as a betrayal of

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<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Home, *Incidents*, p. 80.

<sup>27</sup> Robert C. Fuller, *Spiritual, But Not Religious: Understanding Unchurched America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 41.

spiritualist values by the modern Catholic church. Following the expulsion of D. D. Home from Rome, *The Spiritualist Magazine* described

a country where superstition is made a trade [...], and where a small proportion of true spiritual phenomena has been eked out by nine-tenths of impostures, in the shape of winking Madonnas, bleeding pictures, and chapels of our Lady of Loretto. [...] Truly the days are past for spiritual manifestations in Rome, when all the great and good saints, as they call them, are disowned by a Pope who forbids God to perform again the miracles which were common to all of them.<sup>28</sup>

The *Spiritualist Magazine's* objection to the Catholic reaction to spiritualism was grounded not only in the accusations of charlatanry commonly levelled at spiritualist mediums, but also in a sense of waste. Rome's 'days are past for spiritual manifestations'; God can no 'longer do miracles at Rome'. This sense of waste associated with Catholicism, of the entropy of an aging institution that had rejected not only Protestant reform by the modern-day 'miracles' of spiritualism, was shared by Peabody Hawthorne. 'How mysterious are these old civilizations, which culminate and vanish, leaving ruin, desolation and emptiness, shells of dead beauty,' she wrote. Rome's ruin she attributed to 'the corruptions of the Roman Church which have defiled the land'. The city 'is suffering under an incubus' (492-3). The church that rejected the possibility of miracles, apports, apparitions, materializations and other manifestations of spiritual energy was responsible for the on-going decay of the city. Thus spiritualism, having been rejected by the Catholic Church, was even more vital to the survival of Rome's artistic and spiritual energy; it was a key defence against the city's entropy.

### **Spiritualist Practice amongst the Expatriate Artists**

In early November 1853, Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning held a séance with William and Emelyn Story. Barrett Browning had recently met the medium Mrs. Shaw, who had 'just come from Rome' and had shown her 'copies of

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<sup>28</sup> Quoted in Home, *Incidents*, p. 80.

the mystical papers produced at Rome'.<sup>29</sup> Excited by the phenomena she had witnessed with Mrs. Shaw, Barrett Browning 'proposed sitting down at the table we four, Mr & Mrs Story, Robert & I'. After giving each other "'words of honour" [...] to be on our guard, & preserve the conditions sedulously' the séance began and the table started to tilt.

'Is the communication to me?' each asked. 'No'—till Robert spoke—then, a violent tilting as before. [...] The alphabet was called—and the phrase 'Be earn' ... was spelt out [...] on which it was exclaimed that of course 'Be earnest' must be intended. "Do you mean *Be earnest*" we asked of the spirit—Violent tilting of the table[.]<sup>30</sup>

Robert Browning had a personal antipathy towards spiritualism, but his disinclination to participate in spiritualist practice appears to have been overruled on this occasion; he subsequently became the focus of the séance. The 'exhortation' of the spirit that Browning, the only avowed disbeliever at the table, 'be earnest', is indicative of the way that spiritualism worked to intervene in the lives of its followers. Browning was surrounded by spiritualists in Italy, most notably his wife, but also his acquaintances in Rome: his closest friend, Story, and others including Harriet Hosmer and Hiram Powers. The reach of spiritualism was such that even those who refused to believe its claims were influenced by the movement.

Within the expatriate artistic community in Italy, and particularly in Rome, this intervention and influence was frequently of a distinctly artistic nature; the concerns of the form of spiritualism the artists practiced reflected those of the community more broadly. Of those in the 'Browning circle' who were involved in spiritualism, Porter finds the following shared traits: '[T]hey were professional people; they were sensitive, artistic people' (vii). 'Mr. Story has a sort of undeveloped faculty of moving tables, & writing with the pencil mystically,' Barrett Browning wrote in 1853; 'He takes the pencil & it moves into writing'.<sup>31</sup> At other times, she

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<sup>29</sup> Barrett Browning to Arabella Moulton-Barrett, 12-14 November 1853, *The Brownings' Correspondence, Volume 19*, pp. 333–342 (p. 334).

<sup>30</sup> Barrett Browning to Arabella Moulton-Barrett, 12-14 November 1853, *The Brownings' Correspondence, Volume 19*, pp. 333–342 (pp. 335-6).

<sup>31</sup> Barrett Browning to Arabella Moulton-Barrett, 15 August 1853, *The Brownings' Correspondence, Volume 19*, pp. 223–234 (p. 225).

described his abilities as a medium more forcefully: ‘Mr. Story would mesmerize me with looking at me almost, if I did not get out of the way,—I object to subjecting myself to this power of his’.<sup>32</sup> Harriet Hosmer encountered the spirit of her late Italian maid who told her, ‘Now I am content, now I am happy’.<sup>33</sup> On another occasion, in Hosmer’s bedroom in Rome, ‘a spirit some three feet high, exquisitely formed, came running, dancing to her from the furthest end of the room close up to her knees, when as she stooped towards it, it vanished.’<sup>34</sup> ‘Harriet Hosmer,’ Barrett Browning recorded, ‘has had other visions, & is a writing-medium.’<sup>35</sup> Of Hiram Powers, Barrett Browning notes that he had ‘angel-seeing eyes’; ‘Mr Powers & I are wholly spiritualists’.<sup>36</sup> Barrett Browning herself had graduated from the curiosity of ‘a visionary [...] inclined to knock round at all the doors of the present world to try to get out’ in February 1853, when she would ‘listen with interest to every goblin-story’ to a fully converted spiritualist following a séance with the D. D. Home in Ealing in 1855 (Porter, 47).

After the spiritualist art critic James Jackson Jarves told the Brownings about his experiences at a séance with Home, the medium became, to Barrett Browning, “‘the most interesting person” in England outside of her own family’ (Porter, 47). Home ‘was the most famous of all the nineteenth-century mediums, provoking the most commentary, not only in the spiritualist press, but in the leading Victorian periodicals as well’; he was so well-known that his name was frequently used as a synonym for spiritualists in general and mediums in particular (S. L. Lyons, 93). Attacks on spiritualism frequently contained puns on Home’s name: in Cruikshank’s *A Discovery Concerning Ghosts* he suggests that spiritualists’ beer is ‘Home-

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<sup>32</sup> Barrett Browning to George Goodin Moulton-Barrett, 7-8 October 1853, *The Brownings’ Correspondence, Volume 19*, pp. 311–316 (p. 312).

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in Colbert, p. 47.

<sup>34</sup> *The Brownings’ Correspondence, Volume 20*, ed. by Philip Kelley, Scott Lewis, Edward Hagan, Joseph Phelan & Rhian Williams (Winfield: Wedgestone Press, 2013) pp. 123–129 (pp. 124-5). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

<sup>36</sup> Barrett Browning to Arabella Moulton-Barrett, August 15 1853, *The Brownings’ Correspondence, Volume 19*, pp. 223–234 (p. 229).

brewed’;<sup>37</sup> another satirical publication on spiritualism was entitled “*Home” Thrusts; or, Raps at the Rappers*.<sup>38</sup> ‘I will not say “Britons, *strike* Home,’ quipped Cruikshank, ‘but unless he or the spirits rap out a satisfactory answer, he may rely upon it that he will feel the weight of public opinion’ (30).

Home’s séances, held in rooms that ‘could honestly be described as well lighted’, unlike other mediums who operated in moderate to extreme darkness, normally began with table raps, followed by ‘a quivering movement of the table [...] described by one witness as like the vibration in the cabin of a small steamer when the engine begins to work’.

The table would then tilt up, move about, or ‘float’ suspended in the air; musical instruments would perform in the convenient obscurity afforded by its shelter; hands would be felt clasping the knees of the sitters and pulling portions of their dress; handkerchiefs, flowers, and other light articles, and even heavy bells, would be handed about the circle, under the table[.]<sup>39</sup>

Harry Houdini described Home as ‘a lovable character with a magnetic personality’ who ‘made his way easily and found favor with many who would have spurned him under other conditions.’<sup>40</sup>

Home’s séance with the Brownings took place in Ealing on July 25, 1855. The incident has become notorious as the provocation that inspired Browning’s 1864 poem ‘Mr. Sludge, “The Medium”’, and therefore, ‘[t]he story of what happened that evening has been told and retold,’ notes Porter. ‘We have Robert’s version, Elizabeth’s version, Home’s version, Mr. Merrifield’s version as well as reports of many who were not there, including Mrs. Home, Mrs. Browning’s son, Mr. Rymer’s grandson, Frederick Myers, Houdini, and William Allingham’s diary record of what Browning told him’. These accounts all describe how, during the proceedings, ‘a

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<sup>37</sup> George Cruikshank, *A Discovery Concerning Ghosts; With a Rap at the “Spirit-Rappers”* (London: Frederick Arnold, 1863), p. 33. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>38</sup> “*Home” Thrusts; or, Raps at the Rappers, A Medley by an “Undeveloped” Poet* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1861).

<sup>39</sup> Frank Podmore, *Modern Spiritualism: A History and Criticism*, Vol. 2 (London: Methuen & Co., 1902), p. 232.

<sup>40</sup> Harry Houdini, *A Magician Among the Spirits* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1924), p. 38. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

wreath was put on Mrs. Browning's head. Raps confirmed Home's expressed opinion that it was put there by the hand of one of her deceased relatives' (Porter, 47). Some accounts give details of a 'materialized' face, 'said to be that of a son who had died in infancy,' and describe the moment when 'Browning seized the supposed materialized head and discovered it to be the *bare foot of Mr. Home*' (Houdini, 42). Though Browning subsequently concluded that Home, and by association the whole spiritualist movement, relied on 'tricks' and 'feats by sleight of hand',<sup>41</sup> Barrett Browning wrote of the séance that, 'For my own part, I am confirmed in all my opinions. To me it was wonderful and conclusive'.<sup>42</sup> When the Hawthornes later visited the Brownings at Casa Guidi in Florence, Peabody Hawthorne noted that 'Mr. Browning introduced the subject of spiritism, and there was an animated talk. Mr. Browning cannot believe, and Mrs. Browning cannot help believing' (346). Home himself publically attributed Browning's anger to the fact that he was 'much disappointed that the wreath was not put upon his own head instead of his wife's' (106). Home's wife later elaborated on this theory, equating the wreath placed on Barrett Browning's head with the poet's laurel wreath and wishing Browning could 'have forgiven the want of discernment the spirits showed—reflecting that, while all the world does homage to the genius of his wife, the larger half of it fails to comprehend his own'.<sup>43</sup>

This final assessment of the Brownings' séance with Home draws together the worlds of spiritualism and art that collided in the expatriate artistic community in Rome. Just as Hilda's affinity with other artists leads her to spiritual communion with them in *The Marble Faun*, here, spiritual communion is described as an artistic judgment. Barrett Browning, in describing her motivation 'to hear the rapping spirits' made a direct link between her interest in spiritualism and her ambitions as a writer: 'The truth is I want a knowledge of real life. It would be useful to me in my *profession*, and I have felt my defects in this respect very much indeed. [...] I am convinced that

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<sup>41</sup> Robert Browning, 'Mr. Sludge, "The Medium"', *The Poems of Robert Browning, Volume Four: 1862-1871*, ed. by John Woolford, Daniel Karlin and Joseph Phelan (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 231.

<sup>42</sup> Elizabeth Barrett Browning, quoted in *The Poems of Robert Browning, Volume Four*, p. 205.

<sup>43</sup> Mme Douglas Home, *D. D. Home, His Life and Mission* (London: Trübner & Co., 1888), p. 54. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

I shall think and write better and stronger for the knowledge of them'.<sup>44</sup> For Powers, too, his spiritual experience related directly to his artistic life. He describes childhood dreams of a 'figure of a woman white as snow from head to foot and standing upon some sort of pedestal [...] on the opposite side of the Quechee.'

At the time I knew nothing of sculpture [...] This dream ceased when I began to model—and you know that a white figure of a woman has since been seen in Woodstock and answering in some respects at least to the vision of my childhood. I know not when I first conceived the idea of the 'Greek Slave.' I only know that it was on my mind long before I began it, just as you have seen it—and the dream occurs to me whenever I think of it. Did the swollen river signify the Atlantic which I should cross to produce it? And did the dream cease after I had taken the first step as an artist because it was no longer necessary to stimulate me on the way I should go?<sup>45</sup>

Powers' anecdote of a dream of a ghost of a statue describes two overlapping relationships between his spiritual vision and his art. In the first, the story describes a form of spiritual intervention that aimed to 'stimulate' him towards his destined career in sculpture, which, though conceived in America was to be realised on the other side of the Atlantic. The second, however, describes an exchange of spiritual energy: the dream-figure, which disappeared when his modelling began, is equated to the statue. Like the sculptor Gloriani in *Roderick Hudson*, who on first encountering Christina Light states that, '[t]he name of my idea is the name of the young woman', Powers' is able to convert the dream into the statue because they embody the same spiritual energy (*Roderick Hudson*, 190). This is echoed by Hosmer's description of her process making 'small sketches in clay of our Colonel [Thomas Benton] [...] with which his ghost has inspired me' (Carr, 168).

This energetic conversion between spiritual energy and art was already familiar to sculptors in a more quotidian sense, since much of their professional life was spent sculpting commemorations of the dead. Typical of commissions Story received was this note from sculptor Herbert C. Haseltine: 'My Dear Mr. Story, We would all like to have a bas-relief made of dear Papa; I suppose you know that he died

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<sup>44</sup> Barrett Browning, quoted in Porter, p. 39.

<sup>45</sup> Hiram Powers, quoted in Colbert, pp. 67-68.



at 11.40 this morning. Will you see about taking the mask *as soon as possible*?<sup>46</sup> The need to take a death mask ‘as soon as possible’ from the body of the deceased emphasised the sense that one embodiment of the subject was being directly exchanged for another, much as Dickens’ *Pictures from Italy* contained the ‘liveliest impressions of novelty and freshness’ because it was ‘written on the spot’ (10). Amongst Hosmer’s funerary commissions was the tomb of sixteen-year-old Judith Falconnet for the Church of Sant’Andrea delle Fratte, which made Hosmer ‘the first American to create a tomb for a Catholic church in Rome’ (Culkin, 46). Hosmer worked from a ‘very good’ death mask, stating that the ‘beauty of the thing must depend on the fidelity with which I render the delicacy and elegance of the figure’ (Carr, 117; Culkin, 46). Busts and statues made from death masks in this manner therefore played a similar function to the ‘spiritual’ copies of old masters praised by Peabody Hawthorne, which ‘save in imperishable lines the vanishing masterpieces of fresco-painting’ (320-1). Hosmer’s Falconnet commission, furthermore, moved her own memorial artwork further along the spectrum of thingness that ran between object, art and Catholic relic.

The conversion into art of the dead body was a form of preservation, but also sanitization and idealization: though horrified by most instances of loss and entropy, Peabody Hawthorne notes her disgust at the embalmed corpses of ‘grim prince-doctors’ she viewed in the crypt of the Medician chapel: ‘Conceive the idea of trying to preserve the *dead bodies* of such frightful-looking persons—of being anxious to keep forever that under lip, for instance!’ (372). The role of sculpture in the preservation of the dead was therefore an idealising one, which replaced the ‘grim’ realities of death and decay with a stable and unchanging form. Hosmer experienced a similar horror to Peabody Hawthorne’s when she encountered the corpse of a soldier after the capture of Rome in September 1870, ‘all covered with dust, his hands and face like marble, and a most frightful gunshot wound in the lower part of his face’ (Carr, 285). The dead body was ‘like marble’, but horrifically, unlike marble, it was unstable, unpreserved, entropic.

The goal of idealising the dead in their preserved form was one shared by both spiritualism and neoclassical sculpture. Hosmer noted this element of the sculptor’s

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<sup>46</sup> Haseltine, Herbert C., ‘Herbert C. Haseltine to William Wetmore Story’, Letter, Undated, Box 6, Folder: Misc E – H, Story Family Papers, Ransom Center.

task in an anecdote regarding a discussion with ‘two or three gentlemen’ who hoped to commission a ‘bronze statue of one of their fellow citizens’ who ‘was known by his large feet’: “‘Perhaps we might tone them down a little,’” said I. “When we model a crooked nose, we try to straighten it a bit; when we model a too large mouth, we slyly make it a trifle smaller; in short, try to infuse a little beauty into our work; why not reduce the size of the feet a little?” If not, she suggests, “‘why go to the expense of the face, why not make a mould upon his boots, cast the boots in bronze, and place them, alone, upon a pedestal?’” (Carr, 285). Max Black’s assertion that, ‘only by being unfaithful in some respect can a model represent its original,’ is supported here by Hosmer’s stance: unlike in the transmission of energy between artworks, as in Peabody Hawthorne’s ideal copying, the transmission of energy between human and artwork depended upon a changing form (257). Just as the soldier’s corpse ‘covered with dust [...] like marble’ was experienced by Peabody Hawthorne as grotesque in its empty entropy, so too, Hosmer implies, is a cast of a dead man’s boots. This aspiration to the ideal was key to the neoclassical movement more broadly: Roderick Hudson wishes to ‘understand beauty in the large ideal way’ (*Roderick Hudson*, 116). Story, for whom the artist’s studio was ‘a little ideal world in itself’, similarly believed that works of art ‘show a desire for something ideal’ (*Conversations*, 309; 7). There was, Hosmer, argued, no contradiction in the projects of idealism and realism. Rather, “‘Realistic” I take to mean “real,” “true to nature,” and therefore I claim that what is known as the classic school furnishes the most commanding examples of realistic art’ (Carr, 333). Ideal art expressed a profound reality of nature that nature alone, in its entropy, was unable to consistently express.

Spiritualism too denied that the idea of the ‘idealised real’ was in any way an oxymoron. The spiritualist Alfred Russell Wallace describes the ‘unanswerable proof’ of spirit life provided by photographs that capture the images of spirits.

I saw all the plates developed, and in each case the additional figure started out the moment the developing fluid was poured on, while my portrait did not become visible till, perhaps, twenty seconds later. I recognised none of these figures in the negatives; but the moment I got the proofs, the first glance showed me [...] an unmistakable portrait of my mother,—like her both in features and expression; not such a likeness as a portrait taken during life, but a somewhat pensive, idealised likeness—*yet still, to me, an unmistakable likeness.* (192)

Colbert argues that Story's sculptures 'recall residents of the heaven envisioned by spiritualists, improved versions of individuals who are not so greatly transformed as to be unrecognizable' (66). It is to images such as the 'pensive, idealised [...] *unmistakable likeness*' of Alfred Russell Wallace's mother that Story owes his vision of the ideal afterlife.

## II. SPIRITUALISM AND ROMAN ENTROPY

### Entropic Rome and the Search for Continuity

When Dorothea enters the 'city of visible history' on her honeymoon with Casaubon, she encounters a place in which images of continuously circulating energy (the 'light of an alien world' that in its never-ending continuity has become 'monotonous', and the 'forms both pale and glowing' that 'jarred her as with an electric shock') are combined with those of entropic confusion, decay and ruin: the 'vast wreck of ambitious ideals,' the 'stupendous fragmentariness' of 'the past of a whole hemisphere [...] moving in funeral procession', the 'red drapery [...] spreading itself everywhere like a disease of the retina' (*Middlemarch*, 195). As was discussed in Chapter One, Dorothea's experience of psychological entropy in response to the city's ruin is repeated in multiple accounts, both in fiction and non-fiction, of visitors' engagement with Rome: the city's unavoidable entropy confuses Dorothea, crushes Kenyon, chills Nathaniel Hawthorne, rusts Dickens and paralyzes Charlotte Eaton.

Peabody Hawthorne's *Notes in England and Italy* details a similar encounter with Rome's decline, and explores the conflict between entropy and continuity of the city in spiritual terms:

I wish I could seize something elusive and unsatisfactory in the divine loveliness of this Italy, so as to express what I always feel when I look upon it. ... It is like the ghost of a very precious reality. It is something that *has been*, even while it is *now* that I have a sense of it. Italy is a land of monuments; and those who builded them have long passed away. A mighty silence succeeds them. [...] The land seems catching its breath. It is not dead, but oppressed and suffocated. I cannot put my feeling into words, and I may as well not try to do so. (468)

Peabody Hawthorne's depiction here relates the city's political oppression to its moral and physical decline: the city, like its citizens, is 'oppressed and suffocated'. The image of the 'ghost' suggests the ambivalent tension between presence and absence in the city: a ghost is a manifestation of absence that indicates something both there and not there; it was therefore a key metaphor for expatriate artists' seeking to understand the entropy and longevity of Rome in spiritual terms. The 'ghost' behaves in the same way as artistic energy; it moves between objects, contained but not constrained by them: as Michael Bright describes, 'the division of body and spirit is [...] inevitable given the nineteenth-century preoccupation with the dichotomy between material and spiritual, a dichotomy that translates into art as form and substance' (246). Just as the 'excess of matter' that Charlotte Eaton found in Rome 'paralysed [her] pen', the 'mighty silence' caused by Rome's uncanny, 'ghostly' combination of both continuity and death forces Peabody Hawthorne to become likewise silent: 'I cannot put my feelings into words.'

The effect of Roman entropy upon its expatriate inhabitants is apparent, too, in the mood of nostalgia that permeated contemporary accounts of artistic life in Rome. Henry James' *William Wetmore Story and His Friends* offers this account of Rome's mid- to late century expatriate artistic community:

They came from a world that was changing, but they came to one likewise not immutable, not quite fixed, for their amusement, as under a glass case; and it would have quickened their thrill to be a little more aware than they seem generally to have been that some possible sensations were slipping away for ever, that they were no more than just in time for the best parts of the feast[.] (1: 8)

While James' nostalgia for this particular period in Rome is discussed in detail in the Conclusion, it echoes sentiments expressed by members of the community who were in fact extremely aware of the 'sensations [...] slipping away for ever'. James' evocation of a world 'not quite fixed [...] under a glass case' echoes Peabody Hawthorne's desire to 'seize something elusive and unsatisfactory in the divine loveliness of this Italy' and draws a link between the experience of Rome and the growing scientific ability to understand and categorise in 'glass cases' the changing world (468). Tamara S. Wagner notes that Victorians' 'increasingly anxious relationship with the past and the future and their expressions of nostalgia cannot be seen apart from their attempts to come to terms with evolutionary science', and in this

case that is seen to extend more broadly still to encompass scientific theories of entropy, also.<sup>47</sup> James' nostalgia, apparently derived from his membership of the 'less lucky generation' that came to Rome too late 'for the best parts of the feast', defines itself in opposition to the experience of his predecessors in Rome who were nonetheless similarly grappling with entropy and change.

The fact that James' 'Precursors' were far from oblivious to Roman entropy is most starkly evident in changes made to successive editions of Story's Roman 'guide book' *Roba di Roma*. The first edition (1863) already contains mentions of change and erosion: 'Day by day, the sharp Roman traits are wearing out; and within the fifteen years that I have known it, much that was picturesque and peculiar has been obliterated' (356). In subsequent editions, however, Story's original endeavour 'to show you a few sketches of Modern Life in Rome' becomes muddled by footnotes and forewords detailing the disappearance of sights described in the original text (555). Beneath a description of illuminations of St. Peter's that itself focuses on ruin and the passing of time ('It is a bankrupt heiress, an old and wrinkled beauty, that tells strange tales of its former wealth and charms, when the world was at its feet. It is the broken-down poet of the madhouse,--with flashes of wild fancies still glaring here and there amid the sad ruin of his thoughts') is a footnote noting that the illuminations have been discontinued (118-9). The preface to the sixth edition, dated November 25, 1870, a month after the capture of Rome, the final stage of Italian unification, expresses the hope that 'with the entrance of liberty, the old picturesque customs and costumes that gave so peculiar a charm to Rome will not be driven out'.<sup>48</sup> However, the preface to the eighth edition (1886) describes as 'a sorrow and a sadness',

the destruction of the villas and gardens within the city, which formerly lent such a peculiar charm to Rome. [...] The nightingales will sing no more, and lovers and friends from afar will no longer wander there and yield their spirits to the charm of its romance. That is of the past.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Tamara S. Wagner, *Longing: Narratives of Nostalgia in the British Novel, 1740—1890* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2004), p. 28.

<sup>48</sup> Story, 'Preface to the sixth edition,' *Roba di Roma*, eighth edition (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1894) p. vii.

<sup>49</sup> Story, 'Preface to the eighth edition' *Roba di Roma*, eighth edition, p. iv.

And just as Rome's ruins enacted their ruin on visitors' psychologies, the destructive changes Story describes affect the text itself: 'I have not attempted to alter what was originally written [...] Here and there notes have been added to indicate changes, but more than this it was impossible to do without rewriting much of the book. Parts of it belong to the past'.<sup>50</sup> Instead of 'rewriting [...] the book', Story annotates and writes over it: 'NOTE—What is said above of the exhibitions of violence and cruelty to animals, can no longer, I regret to say, be affirmed as true';<sup>51</sup> 'As to what has been previously written on pages 372-375, in the chapter on the Campagna, in regard to the race and breed of horses in Rome, this also is no longer true';<sup>52</sup> 'Since this was written, all the stucco figures in this tomb have [been stolen]'.<sup>53</sup> In this way Story creates a palimpsest that accurately mirrors the city that Elizabeth Barrett Browning called, 'palimpsest Rome—a watering-place written over the antique'.<sup>54</sup> Contrary to James' assertion that Story's generation should have been 'a little more aware' of Roman 'sensations [...] slipping away for ever', the mid- to late century expatriate artistic community were already defining their relationship to the city in nostalgic terms. James' own nostalgic account in *William Wetmore Story*, while claiming a degree of originality by distancing its mood from that of previous accounts, is in fact an example of Roman repetition of the kind discussed in the previous chapter, as much as a critique or elegy. Even while mourning the entropy of Rome, James participates in an act of recycling Roman energy by repeating the nostalgic relationship to the city expressed by his subjects.

The expatriate artists' focus on recycling energy through processes, on various levels, of copying and 'spiritual reproduction' is a response to the ever-present threat of loss and decay even as it participates in a system of apparently endless cycles of energy. It is for this reason that the discovery of forged artworks was so unsettling to writers such as Peabody Hawthorne and Story: forgeries disrupted this system of cyclical energy-flow, revealing an absence of aura that made them symbols of entropy, like the 'empty chrysalids—deserted shells' that Peabody Hawthorne found

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<sup>50</sup> Story, *Roba di Roma*, eighth edition, p. v.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 477.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 479.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 347.

<sup>54</sup> Barrett Browning to Mary Russell Mitford, 19 May 1854, *The Brownings' Correspondence, Volume 20*, pp. 214–216 (p. 214).

the bodies of nineteenth-century Italians to be, in comparison to the ‘masters in Art, in State, and in Science, who stand clothed in white marble in the Court of the Uffizzi’ (468).

The complicating factor of the city’s evident entropy—‘the successive ages since Rome began to decay’ that ‘have done their best to ruin the very ruins’—and in particular the action of entropy not only upon the city but upon the artists themselves, threatened to disrupt the system of continuous artistic function that justified the work and existence of the expatriate artistic community (Hawthorne, *Notebooks*, 107). The threat of entropy, of Peabody Hawthorne’s ‘mighty silence’, directed the attention of artists towards understanding the nature of continuity, and in particular a need to define what could, and could not, be relied upon to continue. The ‘aura’ of an artwork was seen to be a detachable form of artistic energy that could be transported between objects and bodies that acted as ‘shells’ or storage; anxiety regarding entropy placed increasing significance on the ability of aura to move across time—to behave, in fact, like a ghost—acting as a bridge between present and past, thus providing a form of continuity immune to the pressures of ruin and decay.

### **William Wetmore Story’s Anti-Entropic Musical Energy**

In Story’s writing on aura, he alights on the word ‘music’ to describe it: in a poorly translated poem, for example, ‘[a]ll the tone and perfume is gone. The dead words remain, but the music has fled’ (*Conversations*, 101). In *Roba di Roma*, he again uses music to represent aura, this time on the broader scale of energy in Rome that is able to move, continuously and uninterrupted, across time. Jane Stabler notes that ‘[t]ravel literature tends to be dominated by the visual, but the literature of exile [...] attends to auditory nerves’ (*Artistry of Exile*, 223). Story’s exile in Rome leads to an acute awareness of the way the sound of the city relates to his own understanding of his place within it. The first chapter of *Roba di Roma* that takes place in Rome (Chapter One describes the approach to the city) is devoted to a description of ‘Street Music in Rome’: ‘Whoever has passed the month of December in Rome will remember [...] the *pifferari* playing in the streets below’: ‘Their song is called a *novena*, from its being sung for nine consecutive days [...] The same words and music serve, however, for both celebrations’ (9). Story places emphasis here on the ubiquity, regularity and

continuity of Roman music. The *novena*, a song defined by the length of time for which it is sung, marks the passing of time both on a daily and yearly basis, and furthermore, is a manifestation of living, continuous Roman history: the *pifferari* tell the narrator that they have ‘come to Rome to play the *novena* [...] *per trenta tre anni*’, to which he responds, ‘For thirty-three years more, let us hope’ (12). Story here takes advantage of the particular relationship between musical performance, musical reception, and time, to evoke a city of living historical artistic energy. Jeremy S. Begbie describes how ‘the production and reception of music deeply implicates physical realities and these realities are themselves time-laden,’ whilst Georg Picht finds that music’s representation of time is a ‘transcendental phenomenon’ that embodies ‘the *phenomenality* of time’.<sup>55</sup> Thomas Clifton summarises the difference between the parallel temporalities identified by Begbie and Picht: ‘There is a distinction between the time which a piece *takes* and the time which a piece presents of *evokes*’.<sup>56</sup> *Roba di Roma* exploits this distinction between the temporal reality of the performance taking place on the contemporary street, with its regulated internal rhythm and daily schedule, and the historical reality of the tradition and context of the song that the music evokes and makes present. Story compares the ‘happiness and content’ derived from ‘this constant habit of song’ to ‘the sad silence in which we Anglo-Saxons perform’, finding that ‘it seems to show a less harassed and anxious spirit’: he again uses music to collapse chronological boundaries: ‘The nation is old, but the people are children in disposition’ (21). Story’s street music rejuvenates the ancient. It is a sign of the contemporaneity of the living present and a living past in Rome that acts as an antidote to Peabody Hawthorne’s entropic ‘mighty silence’.

This portrait of living history in Rome contrasts with that given by the most famous nineteenth-century guidebook to the city, Murray’s *Handbook for Travellers in Central Italy*, which appeared in multiple editions from 1843 onwards. Jan Seidler notes that, ‘Most narrative accounts of Italy published prior to *Roba di Roma* were

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<sup>55</sup> Jeremy S. Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 31; Georg Picht, quoted in and translated by Richard Klein, ‘Theses on the Relationship between Music and Time’, in *Identity and Difference: Essays on Music, Language and Time*, ed. by Peter DeJans, Frank Agsteribbe, Sylvester Beelaert and Jeroen D’hoë, trans. Wieland Hoban (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004), pp. 133-188 (p. 137).

<sup>56</sup> Thomas Clifton, *Music as Heard: A Study in Applied Phenomenology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 81.



historical in orientation and heavily cribbed from the handbooks of John Murray' (230). Murray's depiction of Rome is 'dominated by the visual,' as Stabler suggests, and therefore silent (*Artistry of Exile*, 223). Furthermore, it is static: movement is restricted to that of the tourists themselves, traveling through a landscape of fixed ruins. The guide begins with a series of routes to Rome, moving the reader-traveller through the ordered and inert landscape. The introduction to Rome itself fixes it geographically: 'Rome is situated in the central plain of the Campagna [...] It stands in 41° 54' north latitude, and 12° 28' east longitude, and is 15 miles distant from the sea coast' (254). The city is then divided into composite structures for the tourists' consideration: Gates, Bridges, Walls. Even the ruins are categorised in such a way as to render them immobile, fixed in the text and in their particular segment of history: 'The ruins of Rome may be divided into three classes: 1. The works of the kings; 2. The works of the republic; 3. The works of the empire' (266). This is Rome 'fixed, for [the tourists'] amusement, as under a glass case', in the mode criticized by James. The categorisation and stabilisation of Rome's ruins in Murray's guide is heightened by the advice to perceive it, initially, from a distance:

Whoever would appreciate and enjoy the ruins of Rome will find it absolutely necessary [...] to make himself acquainted with their relative position [...] . There is no spot so peculiarly adapted for thus purpose as the *Tower of the Capitol*. (263)

Murray's Rome is a distant one, even once the tourist has arrived: readers are directed to view the city from a height that removes them from direct contact, offers a view of static historic sights rather than the movement around and inside them, and takes them out of earshot of the music of the living, continuous city.

By rejecting the silent, static city of Murray's guide and placing music at the heart of his portrait of Rome, Story emphasises energetic continuity. Just as, in Tyndall's description of the conservation of energy in which '[i]t rolls in music through the ages,' Story's music evokes the continuous artistic energy of Rome (Tyndall, 449). This link is made explicit by the categorization of music by occupation of workers engaged in various kinds of craft: after a deviation into the Campagna, the narrative returns to Rome to illustrate that, '[t]he city also sings as well as the country': 'The carpenter as he drives his plane; the blacksmith as he wields his hammer and strikes from the sputtering iron its fiery constellations; the cobbler as he

pounds the soles of old shoes [...] all solace themselves with song' (*Roba*, 31). Song in Story's Rome is a unifying link between these various forms of labour. By aligning song with craft and production, and in particular the artistic production (and energy-recycling function) performed by the marble cutter, a worker so inherently musical that the chips of excess marble are 'ringing', Story's Roman streets channel not only song, but artistic energy.

In Story's only novel, *Fiammetta* (1886), his use of music draws together the artistic energy evoked by the songs of the craftsmen and the time-travelling qualities of the *novena*. The novel's protagonist, Marco, a painter residing in Rome, leaves the city for the summer and encounters Fiammetta in a rural Italian village. Marco, instantly attracted to her, wishes to paint her: 'I want you to be my model—my naiad [...] the protecting spirit of the stream, the torrent, the brook. They do not exist except in fable'.<sup>57</sup> In the character of Fiammetta, Story reverses the idea expressed in *Roba di Roma* that '[t]he nation is old, but the people are children in disposition' (*Fiammetta*, 21). Fiammetta is a 'child', but one that possesses ancient qualities: 'There is evidently in her veins the blood of some noble race—everything shows it. It is not mere peasant blood—no, no!—but some high graft of civilisation on a sturdy wild peasant stock' (*Fiammetta*, 102). Fiammetta, simultaneously young and old, model and naiad, has a gift for remembering song: after hearing an improvised verse sung by Marco, she asks him to repeat it, and when he is unable to, 'she stopped and looked up into the sky sideways for a minute, and then she clapped her hands and cried, "I have caught them, signor; I have caught the birds!" and then she repeated the words' (162). Fiammetta is a defence against loss on many levels: in her youth she embodies qualities of her ancestors; in her beauty she evokes an ancient, fabled spirit, and she is able to capture and contain the fleeting, impermanent quality of music in such a way as to conserve it. She is anti-entropic.

The song she is able to remember and repeat is itself concerned with time, loss and continuity: in Marco's words, though neither he nor Fiammetta had ever 'heard that *rispetto* before', '[t]here is nothing new in it. It is the song we are always singing—everybody is always singing—sometimes to one air and sometimes to another' (161).

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<sup>57</sup> Story, *Fiammetta* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1886), p. 120. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

Oh if summer would last forever!  
 Oh if youth would leave us never!  
 Oh if the joy we have in the spring  
 Forever its happy song would sing,  
 And love and friendship never take wing,  
 But stay with us forever!  
 Then—ah then!—if such gifts were given,  
 Who of us mortals would ask for heaven? (161-2)

The plea made by these lyrics that ‘joy [...] forever its happy song would sing’ is answered by the fact and treatment of the song in the narrative: Fiammetta’s anti-entropic qualities enable her to preserve and repeat it, creating a circular pattern of recycled energy compounded by the recording of the song in the text itself. It is both call and response in one: the form responds to the needs of its content.

Story’s song acts in this way as both a reply to and rebuttal of Keats’ ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’, which establishes ‘a contrast between the permanence of art and the transiency of life or the static-permanence in art and the dynamic-transient in life’.<sup>58</sup> Keats’ ‘Ode’ celebrates the urn for its resistance to decay and ruin: it is ‘unravish’d’ and therefore its subjects ‘cannot fade’. It features the ‘happy, happy boughs! That cannot [...] ever bid the Spring adieu’ apparently longed for in the lyrics of Story’s song. However, the price of immortality in Keats’ poem is silence: the urn’s ‘silent form’ is linked in a simile to ‘eternity’; the ‘happy melodist, unwearied / For ever piping songs for ever new’ is playing ‘unheard’ ‘spirit ditties of no tone’.<sup>59</sup> Though Keats’ poem argues that ‘melodies [...] unheard / Are sweeter’; Story rejects the enforced silence of the urn’s endurance.

Story’s depiction of music and time in *Roba di Roma* and *Fiammetta* seeks to resolve the problem of eternity’s silence. The ‘frozen art’ of sculpture and ‘the representation of brief snatches of time’ in painting, as described by Miriam in *The Marble Faun*, insist on static subject matter even when depicting movement: ‘there should be a moral standstill since there must of necessity be a physical one’, Kenyon argues (15). Visual art when taken out of time remains the same; a painting removed

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<sup>58</sup> Allen Austin, ‘Keats’s Grecian Urn and the Truth of Eternity’, *College English*, Vol. 25, No. 6 (Mar. 1964), pp. 434-436 (p. 434).

<sup>59</sup> John Keats, ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’, *The Poems of John Keats*, ed. by Jack Stillinger (London: Heinemann, 1978), pp. 372-3.

from its temporal context is still visible; music, by contrast, and as illustrated by Keats, becomes silent when separated from time. Story's entropy-defying, time-travelling music seeks to perform the same task as Belton's 'photographic plate', which stores a record of a stationary moment of time, and can, with the correct 'developing medium' applied, reveal what was previously invisible. Story's writing on Roman music attempts to create a sonic equivalent of the photograph.

There is, therefore, a spiritual dimension to Story's use of music in his writing on Rome; as a writer he acts as the 'developing medium' that insists on giving tone to Keats' 'spirit ditties of no tone'. In a musical arrangement of the song from *Fiammetta* by Frances Boott, the spirituality of anti-entropic music is emphasised:

Oh, if youth would leave us never!  
 If the joy we have in Spring  
 For e'er its happy song would sing—  
 Love and friendship ne'er take wing,  
 But stay with us for ever, ever—  
 Stay for ever!  
 Then- ah! If such gifts were given,  
 Who of us would ask for Heaven?  
 Then- ah! If such gifts were given,  
 Who of us would ask for Heaven?  
 Then- ah! If such gifts were given,  
 Who of us would ask for Heaven?<sup>60</sup>

Boott's arrangement sets the pace of the music as '*moderato*', at which the simple and regular rhythm of the song becomes rolling and continuous.<sup>61</sup> The repetition of the final couplet in this arrangement directs attention to the spiritually ambiguous rejection of Heaven in the lyrics: the request both made and fulfilled by the song—that loss can be avoided—displaces traditional spiritual structures of Christianity. There is no longer a need for heaven in a world in which an idyllic present is continuous. The locus of the spiritual realm has shifted to contemporary life.

Story's use of music as a form of aura that moves through and is impervious to time, gives it the quality of Theodor Adorno's 'apparition' (a term, Berthold

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<sup>60</sup> Francis, Boott (Arr.), 'Fiammetta', Box 7, Folder: Misc 2 of 2, Story Family Papers, MS-4065, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

Hoeckner notes, that Adorno in fact interchanged with Benjamin's 'aura'<sup>62</sup>). Adorno's initial definition of 'apparition' closely echoes that of Benjamin's 'aura':

The artwork as appearance is most closely resembled by the *apparition*, the heavenly vision. Artworks stand tacitly in accord with it as it rises above human beings and is carried beyond their intentions and the world of things. Artworks from which the *apparition* has been driven out without a trace are nothing more than husks, worst than what merely exists, because they are not even useful.<sup>63</sup>

Adorno's *apparition*-less husks resemble Story's '*caput mortuum*', which, as discussed in the previous chapter, was both a version and a reversal of Benjamin's 'object' pried 'from its shell'. However, qualities of Adorno's *apparition* associate it closely with Story's idea of music, beyond the relationship of both to Benjamin's aura. Both Story's and Adorno's notions embody a complex relationship between art and time:

If *apparition* illuminates and touches, the image is the paradoxical effort to transfix this most evanescent instant. In art something momentary transcends; objectivation makes the artwork into an instant. [...] If, as images, artworks are the persistence of the transient, they are concentrated in appearance as something momentary. To experience art means to become conscious of its immanent process as an instant at a standstill [...]. (Adorno, 117)

Adorno's *apparition* holds within it the 'paradoxical effort to transfix this most evanescent instant' that motivates Story's spiritual, anti-entropic music to resolve the 'silent form' of Keats' 'eternity'. A continuous past is made present and embodied.

The problems that Story's music and Adorno's *apparition* seek to solve are similar to the concerns of early spiritualists, for whom 'ghosts' were conceived of in a similar way. The shared vocabulary between spiritualism's project as it related to human life and Adorno's paradoxically transfixed transience in art—the 'apparition'—makes this link clear. Conversely, Adorno's concept of

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<sup>62</sup> Berthold Hoeckner (Ed.), *Apparitions: New Perspectives on Adorno and Twentieth Century Music* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. ix.

<sup>63</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, ed. by Gretel Adorn and Rold Tiedemann, trans. by Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Bloomsbury, 1997), p. 112. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

‘spiritualization’ in art is formulated as a ‘continuous expansion of the mimetic taboo’ that rejects ‘artistic practice since Greek antiquity’ by embracing ‘the sensuously unpleasing, the repulsive’; the mid-nineteenth-century idealist neoclassical approach directly opposed this. ‘Spirit’ for Adorno, is not contained within art, but pursues it, and is thus concerned with reception as much as with creation: ‘Art is not infiltrated by spirit; rather, spirit follows artworks where they want to go, setting free their immanent language.’ Again, the ‘spirit’ of Adorno’s spiritualized art is an entirely different quality to Story’s ‘color, spirit, and fragrance’ and Benjamin’s aura (*Conversations*, 101). Furthermore, Adorno’s spiritualization is self-renouncing—‘the more substantial spiritualization became in art, the more energetically [...] did it renounce spirit, the idea’—whereas the ‘spiritual’ was embraced both by the mid-century artists operating in Rome and by the artworks they produced, which concerned themselves with exploring the nature of both artistic and human spirit, as will be discussed later in this chapter (Adorno, 92). Thus, for the purposes of this discussion, Adorno’s ‘apparition’ will be used in relation to the indirectly and directly spiritual and spiritualist elements of artistic life amongst the expatriation artistic community in Rome.

### **The Science of Spiritualism and Rome’s Energetic Ghosts**

Just as the ‘spiritual’ was embraced by copyists and artists who sought to perpetuate the cycle of Roman artistic energy, the notion permeated the expatriate experience of Rome more broadly. Story’s use of music highlighted the spiritual experience of the city and in particular of its ‘visible history’ that was, in its most general form, described as ‘magnetism’. In *Fiammetta*, Marco describes his response to Fiammetta, the timeless figure resistant to entropy, as being ‘magnetized’ (102). In a similar way the city of Rome exerts not only its entropic, but its spiritual influence on its visitors. Peabody Hawthorne described how, in Rome ‘I both feel how it all was, and, strange to say, I am also magnetized with the power that hovers invisibly in the air’ (544). This magnetizing power takes the form of visions that verge on apparitions: on the Appian Way, she asks:

What legions have stepped on these very identical stones, with their worn traces in which I plant my own foot? I see the unconquerable eagles raised aloft—as the solid phalanx moves on to crush the world—I see them return in triumph. (250)

In the physical connection between her own body and the stones, Peabody Hawthorne finds a connection to those who have previously made the same contact. The fabric of the city of Rome provides a physical connection to history, not only in its own material existence, but in its magnetic power to evoke spirits.

Story shared this experience of Rome's magnetic power to provide encounters with spirits. Charles Colbert notes that Story, 'seems occasionally to have fallen into trance-like states that collapsed the barriers of time and brought him into the presence of the long-departed' (64).

The forms and scenes of the past rise from their graves and pass before us, and the actual and visionary are mingled together in strange poetic confusion. [...] And this is the great charm of Rome—that it animates the dead figures of its history. On the spot where they lived and acted, the Caesars change from the manikins of books to living men [...] when we walk down the Sacred Way and over the very pavement they may once have trod. (*Roba*, 80)

Like Peabody Hawthorne, it is the physical connection to the 'very pavement' that connects Story in this passage to the 'dead figures' of Rome. The spiritual image here is of graphic resurrection of the dead, who 'rise from their graves'. These 'forms and scenes of the past' are soon named in the narrative as 'ghosts of history' (*Roba*, 82). Story revises and repeats this material in *Conversations in a Studio*. Belton describes the spiritual relationship between Roman places and the historical figures associated with them: 'The places great spirits have inhabited or visited seem still to retain dim vestiges of them that touch the imagination. I never pass the Nomentan gate that I do not see Nero [...] I always meet Cicero and Horace as I go down the Sacred Way' (285). Mallett, in response, paraphrases *Roba di Roma*'s statement regarding 'the great charm of Rome': 'It is this that makes Rome so profoundly interesting. It is truly a city of the dead' (286).

Story's writing on the ghosts of Rome is another example of the recycling of material that mimics and participates in the perpetuation of Roman artistic energy. In these instances, it becomes a reflexive act: the material being recycled details another form of energy in the city. Just as Peabody Hawthorne identified 'the power that

hovers invisibly in the air' as the cause of her magnetization in Rome, Story highlights the relationship between the energetic value of the dead in Rome and the 'busy' living: 'the spirits of the past haunt it and dwell in it as much as nay, far more than, the busy persons of today' (286).

In expanding the definition of Roman energy to include the 'ghosts' of the city's past inhabitants, Peabody Hawthorne and Story took advantage of the vagueness of contemporary understanding of the nature of energy, as discussed in the introduction. The nebulousness of the definitions of terms including 'energy' and 'force' was frequently exploited by writers seeking to promote a spiritualist agenda: Hudson Tuttle's *Arcana of Spiritualism* (1871), for example, establishes and then blurs the concept of the circulation of energy to promote a spiritualist worldview, arguing that the 'heat of the sun's surface' was a 'perpetual fountain of life' that was 'the origin of living beings, who derive from its exhilarating rays all their motion, or living force, which stands directly correlated to sunlight and heat.'<sup>64</sup> Winter notes that '[d]efinitions of science were malleable during these years', and that '[e]arlier in the century the manifold, but ambiguous, relations between physical forces and the mind and will formed one of the most tantalizing areas of scientific study' (6-7). Without the 'good names' called for by Tyndall, writers were able to apply the terms and rules of physics to phenomena that could not otherwise be explained, and in particular to the notion of 'spiritual energy'. As Alfred Russell Wallace argued, 'Our limited senses and intellects enable us to receive impressions from [...] light, heat, electricity and gravity; but no thinker will for a moment assert that there can be no other possible modes of action of this primal element' (45). The undeniable possibility of these other forms of unknown energy and 'modes of action' allowed for the application of the rules and vocabulary of physics to both artistic and supernatural experience and belief.

Richard Noakes describes how the dismissal of and belief in these forms of 'undiscovered new forces' were not divided along scientific and spiritualist lines: 'the Victorian period witnessed such fierce scientific, intellectual and theological debates over the boundaries between science and spiritualism, science and pseudo-science, we cannot take such boundaries for granted in our historical analyses.'<sup>65</sup> For example,

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<sup>64</sup> Hudson Tuttle, *Arcana of Spiritualism* (Boston: Adams & Co., 1871), p. 109.

<sup>65</sup> Richard Noakes, 'Spiritualism, science and the supernatural in mid-Victorian Britain', *The Victorian Supernatural*, p. 24. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.



in supporting his argument regarding these unknown forms of energy, Alfred Russell Wallace takes issue with ‘Hume’s definition of a miracle’ as a ‘violation’ or ‘transgression’ of ‘the laws of nature’, because of its underlying assumption

that we know all the laws of nature; that the particular effect could not be produced by some unknown law of nature overcoming the law we do know; it assumes also, that if an invisible intelligent being held an apple suspended in the air, that act would violate the law of gravity.  
(4)

Alfred Russell Wallace insists on his own scientific position—that his argument in fact supports rigorous scientific enquiry into phenomena, rather than dismissal of them—as he makes an argument in favour of spiritualism. Stephen Connor formulates the séance itself as ‘a kind of laboratory for the investigation of the spirit world’ that shared with scientific research ‘the language of investigation, evidence, exhibition and exposure’.<sup>66</sup> For this reason, Noakes argues, ‘controversies over Spiritualism were not, as traditional historiography suggests, struggles between proponents of “science” and “pseudo-science”, but fights between individuals who disagreed on what counted as the proper scientific approach to the world’ (24).

To support their own ‘proper scientific approach’, spiritualists highlighted the apparently ‘miraculous’ nature of earlier scientific discoveries that were later understood to behave according to ‘the laws of nature’: ‘When Benjamin Franklin brought the subject of lightning-conductors before the Royal Society,’ Alfred Russell Wallace notes, ‘he was laughed at as a dreamer, and his paper was not admitted to the *Philosophical Transactions*’ (17). This argument operated in the reverse, too, so that spiritual phenomena could be described in the language of established scientific fact. By using ““Spiritual” analogues to electrical and magnetic forces in explanations of how spirits manifested themselves’, spiritualists hoped to establish their ‘scientific religion’ as a ‘branch of existing scientific disciplines including psychology, physics and physiology’ (Noakes, 31). Hosmer embraced this form of argument by extending it forward in time, in a short play entitled *1975: A Prophetic Drama* (1875), which

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<sup>66</sup> Stephen Connor, ‘The Machine in the Ghost: Spiritualism, Technology, and the “Direct Voice”’, *Ghosts: Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis, History*, ed. by Peter Buse and Andrew Stott (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), p. 204. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

was performed in the Storys' apartments in the Palazzo Barberini. 'The scene was laid in the mummy room of the British Museum, among the mummy cases, the occupants emerging one hundred years later', Hosmer described; the resurrected mummies, played by Story and friends, discuss the use of electricity in the nineteenth century: '[T]he manipulators of that mysterious agent had already appeared. They were called mediums, but it was left for the 20<sup>th</sup> century to understand and to utilize their peculiar gifts' (Carr, 303; Colbert 8).

Electricity was frequently used in spiritualist writing to provide a scientific and relatively well-understood bridge between the known and unknown. The anonymously-authored text *From Matter to Spirit* (1863) describes a séance in which the author explains the 'spirit writing' witnessed as 'some action of electricity', following which, 'the hand wrote, with exceeding rapidity, and no spaces between the words, *Youarerightitiselectricitythatmovesthehandbutthereisaspiritthatguidestheelectricity.*'"<sup>67</sup> Electricity in this account provides a partial answer to the question of how spiritualist phenomena occurred, drawing on the authority of the more established academic discipline of physics to bolster a spiritualist worldview. The 'spiritthatguidestheelectricity' is brought closer to the realm of established scientific fact by its evocation of a known form of energy that was already being harnessed by communication technologies including the telegraph. Iwan Rhys Morus describes how writers on the telegraph 'waxed lyrical over the way in which the new invention made the mysterious fluid, electricity, subservient to mankind', and 'more than one' quoted the Job passage: 'Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are.'<sup>68</sup> The description of new, astonishing technologies in spiritual language further enabled spiritualists to describe their own practices in technological terms.

Spiritualists referred to technological advances and scientific discoveries to establish their own authority, and, furthermore, to highlight the purpose of the movement's central mission: 'A century ago, a telegram from three thousand miles'

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<sup>67</sup> 'C.D'., *From Matter to Spirit, The Result of Ten Years' Experience in Spirit Manifestations* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, 1863), pp. 52-3. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>68</sup> Iwan Rhys Morus, "'The Nervous System of Britain': Space, Time and the Electric Telegraph in the Victorian Age'. *The British Journal for the History of Science* 33.4 (2000), pp. 455-475 (p. 456). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

distance, or a photograph taken in a fraction of a second, would not have been believed possible,' wrote Alfred Russell Wallace. These technologies 'would not have been credited on any testimony, except by the ignorant and superstitious who believed in miracles' (39). New nineteenth-century technologies in archaeology and geology enabled access to what was previously unknown and unreachable, as discussed in the first chapter. Simultaneously, the development of the telegraph and railway network led to increased communication abilities across both distance and time. Wolfgang Schivelbusch describes how the nineteenth-century view of the railways was as the 'annihilation of space and time' (31). This phrase is also used by Morus who writes that for Victorians it was 'comparatively commonplace to assert that the telegraph had "annihilated time and space"' (456). These technologies were concerned with access, contact and communication across previously untraversable boundaries, which were likewise the concerns of spiritualism. Howard Kerr describes the rise of spiritualism as

an extension into religious affairs of popular ideas of technological progress and 'scientific' miracle. Thus it was that the mechanics of spirit communication were explained by the pseudoscientific concepts of mesmerism, that the innovation of alphabetical rappings was compared to the invention of the telegraph[.] (9)

In this way, spiritualism aligned itself in both form and content, in its description of its activities and the motivation behind them, with the goals of the scientific community.

### **III. SPIRITUALIST THINGS, ROMAN THINGS AND COLLABORATIVE SPIRITUAL ART**

#### **'Each man would ask of all objects what they mean': Spiritualist Things**

Despite the relationship between spiritualism and contemporary scientific thought, the spiritualist project also worked to address the anxieties that arose from technological and scientific progress. Sherrie Lynn Lyons draws a link between concern 'that modern scientific discoveries were inevitably leading them to a materialistic worldview' and spiritualism, which could 'provide an ideal solution to

the fears and anxieties of the time' by offering assurance that life continued after death (S. L. Lyons, 87). The spiritualist Lord Brougham is quoted in Benjamin Coleman's *Rise and Progress of Spiritualism in England* (1871) establishing the relationship between 'our materialistic manufacturing age' and spiritualism in the following analogy: 'even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud; if it be no bigger than a man's hand, it is modern spiritualism.'<sup>69</sup> The spiritualist approach to this opposition is more clearly summarised in the title of *From Matter to Spirit*. Adorno identifies this anti-materialist reaction to an industrialised and mechanised society as a key attribute of the occult project:

The occultist draws the ultimate conclusion from the fetish-character of commodities: menacingly objectified labor assails him on all sides from demonically grimacing objects. What has been forgotten in a world congealed into products, the fact that it has been produced by men, is split off and misremembered as a being-in-itself added to that of the objects and equivalent to them. Because objects have frozen in the cold light of reason, lost their illusory animation, the social quality that now animates them is given an independent existence both natural and supernatural, a thing among things.<sup>70</sup>

Nineteenth-century spiritualism was a reaction against the perceived materialism of the newly-industrialised world, just as Hilda's form of 'spiritual copying' was established by Hawthorne in opposition to the mechanical reproduction of artworks in Rome.

Just as Hilda's 'spiritual copying' produced material copies, spiritualism, despite its stated opposition to materialism, nonetheless relied on materialism to support its claims. As Dominic Janes describes, '[i]t was the very draining of belief from the material world to the immaterial realm [...] that left the animation of material objects as increasingly transgressive and as a focus for the melodramatic imagination' (17). An *All the Year Round* article described an 1866 lecture by D. D. Home in

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<sup>69</sup> Benjamin Coleman, *The Rise and Progress of Spiritualism in England* (London: Beveridge & Fraser, 1871), pp. 20-21.

<sup>70</sup> Theodor Adorno, 'Theses Against the Occult', in *The Stars Down to Earth, and other essays on the irrational in culture*, ed. by Stephen Crook (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 172-181 (p. 173).

London as ‘very dull and heavy, being all about the indestructability of matter’.<sup>71</sup> Spiritualist practice often leant on this by providing ‘readings’ of objects that included not only the literal reading of spirit writing, normally produced by chalk placed between two slates, but also, as Alfred Russell Wallace describes, the ‘reading’ of nutshells, in which ‘printed mottoes enclosed in nutshells’ were presented to a clairvoyant, who is able to ‘read’ the motto simply by considering the object; ‘The shell is then broken open and examined, and hundreds of mottoes have been thus read correctly’ (63-4). The practice of ‘reading’ mottoes enclosed within nutshells was a literalization of the spiritualist conception of things as containing within them meaning that could be accessed by mediums. Contemporary descriptions of séances gave accounts of ‘apports’, objects that materialised during the course of the séance and which Arthur Conan Doyle considered the most ‘curious and dramatic phase of psychic phenomenon’ (214). The forms of apports were diverse, ranging from ‘Indian lamps, amulets, fresh fruit’ to ‘a very perfect bird’s nest, beautifully constructed of some very fine fibre mixed with moss’ to ‘birds, beasts and fish’, although flowers appeared most frequently.<sup>72</sup> The focal point of many séances was, therefore, material as much as it was spiritual. ‘Spiritualism,’ Connor argues, ‘was not so much endangered as driven by the demand for empirical evidence, since the entire purpose and function of the séance was to provide, time and again, manifest and unignorable proofs’ (204). The role apports played as ‘manifest [...] proofs’ was invaluable, and forced an anti-materialist movement to lean heavily on material things.

Critics of spiritualism highlighted the hypocrisy of the movement’s own materialism even as it denounced the ‘materialistic manufacturing age’ that surrounded it. Illustrator George Cruikshank’s satirical pamphlet, *A Discovery Concerning Ghosts* (1863) mocked spiritualists’ opposition ‘to anything like “materialism”’ while maintaining keen emphasis on the material details of apparitions: he asks spiritualists to explain what

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<sup>71</sup> ‘All the Year Round’, quoted in John Nevil Maskelyne, *Modern Spiritualism: A Short Account of its Rise and Progress* (London: Frederick Warne and Co., 1875), p. 40.

<sup>72</sup> See Conan Doyle, p. 214; Colbert, p. 26. See also J. Hewatt McKenzie, *Spirit Intercourse: Its Theory and Practice* (New York: Mitchell Kennerly, 1917). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

A PAIR OF BUCKSKINS are made of? And what a pair of TOP-BOOTS are made of? And whether these *materials* are *spiritualised* by any process, or whether THE CLOTHES WE WEAR ON OUR BODIES BECOME A PART AND PARCEL OF OUR SOULS?

Cruikshank's *reductio ad absurdum* of spiritualist logic regarding matter imagines that if 'the ghost of a lady had to make her appearance here, she could not present herself before company without her shoes and stockings, so *there must be* GHOSTS OF STOCKINGS', and concludes that 'there must be [...] the *spirit* of woollen cloth, the *spirit* of leather, the *spirit* of a coat, the *spirit* of boots and shoes. There must also be the *spirit* of trousers, *spirits* of gaiters, waistcoats, neckties, *spirits* of buckles' and so on (26). By leaning on, and questioning, the division 'between material and spiritual', Cruikshank throws into question 'the division of body and spirit' (Bright, 246).

J. Hewatt McKenzie's *Spirit Intercourse*, published in 1917, claimed to offer the first coherent spiritualist explanation for the existence of spirit-clothing, noting that 'a description of the method of its construction has never before been given to the public' (206). McKenzie presents an image of spiritual industry in which weavers operate 'chemical generators, which, revolving at a high velocity, draw from the air particles of matter of various qualities and substances, from which are manufactured articles similar to cloth' (206). 'The sight of such operations,' claims McKenzie, 'banishes the idea that spirit drapery grows as if by magic' (207). In the nineteenth-century, however, there was no common understanding of a parallel clothing-manufacture industry in the spirit world, and thus the notion that 'spirit drapery grows as if by magic' was held to an extent by spiritualists and their critics alike. Cruikshank's tongue-in-cheek analysis of spirit clothing therefore identifies the significant role that things played within the spiritualist movement in the nineteenth-century: while spiritualists did not refer to the apports and materialised clothes worn by apparitions in their séances as the 'ghosts of' objects, their appearance testified to a belief in the afterlife of things.

In Benjamin's formulation, art objects contain an aura that acts as 'historical testimony'; in the context of the séance, spiritualist things *were* the historical testimony; spiritualist apports were quintessential Roman things. The divide Joseph Leo Koerner identifies in the study of objects in art history, between art historians

‘who study what objects mean and those who study how objects are made’,<sup>73</sup> is unsustainable from the spiritualist perspective: these two strands of enquiry cannot be separated because the object’s meaning is defined by the circumstances of its (perceived) making. Lorraine Daston in *Things That Talk* (2004) describes another parallel divide:

Historically, things have been said to talk for themselves in two ways, which, from an epistemological point of view, are diametrically opposed to one another. On the one hand, there are idols: false gods made of gold or bronze or stone that make portentous pronouncements to the devout who consult them. [...] On the other hand, there is self-evidence: *res ipsa loquitor*, the thing speaks for itself. It does so in mathematics, law, and religion. (11-12)

Spiritualist objects are significant because of their ‘self-evidence’, but also because of their historical testimony and meaning, which creates, in the séance, spiritualist things that are able to speak, quite literally, as idols. Emerson traced this back to the writings of Swedenborg, from whose writings spiritualism took much of its philosophy: ‘One would say that as soon as men had the first hint that every sensible object,—animal, rock, river, air, —nay, space and time, subsists not for itself, nor finally to a material end, but as a picture-language to tell another story of beings and duties, [...] that each man would ask of all objects what they mean’.<sup>74</sup> With their dual and overlapping modes of ‘talking for themselves’, the things of the nineteenth-century séance combined the power of the art object’s aura and historical testimony with the cult value of a religious relic, and were placed in a religious context that while controversial within Protestantism was nonetheless accessible to expatriate artists in a way that Catholicism was generally not.

Charles Colbert explores David Sloane’s assertion that ‘the art museum supplanted the cemetery in the late nineteenth century as a favoured locale for leisurely, morally uplifting activities’ in a discussion of the collections of the Leyland Stanford Junior Museum. Alongside, ‘Greek, Roman and Egyptian antiquities’, Jane

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<sup>73</sup> Joseph Leo Koerner, quoted in *Things That Talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science*, ed. by Lorraine Daston (New York: Zone Books, 2004), p. 15. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>74</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, ‘Swedenborg; or, the Mystic’, in *The Prose Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Boston: James R. Osgood, 1875), pp. 49-78 (p. 63).

Stanford planned to display ‘the largest and finest collection of apports in the world’ including ‘a Roman lamp encrusted in mud’ (Colbert, 58). Some of the apports intended for display, then, would have been indistinguishable from the ‘non-spiritual’ artefacts, and all were intended to bolster the ‘soul life’ of Stanford students. This influence would take the form of the ‘[u]nconscious impressions’ made by Italian art in Story’s *Conversations*, ‘that sink into the soul, and alter life’: ‘As the students wandered through its corridors, vague sensations might overtake them, ones akin to those caused by psychically energized artifacts’ (Story, 9; Colbert, 59).

In the example of the Stanford Museum there is a clear overlap between the categories of apports and Roman things, both of which were considered in the context of the project to be ‘psychically energized’. This connection, whilst evident in the American museum, was overwhelmingly apparent to visitors in Rome itself; the language of spiritualism infused descriptions of Roman things. Story’s assertion that Rome ‘is haunted by ghosts that outnumber by myriads the living’ is supported by his in-depth description of the ‘psychically energized’ things found in Roman soil in *Roba di Roma*: the ‘*scaraboeus* which once adorned the finger of an Etruscan king, in whose dust he now grows his beans; or the broken head of an ancient jar in marble or terra-cotta, or a lacrymatory of a martyred Christian’ (314). Like the Stanford museum, then, Rome was an archive of ghosts. Story’s Roman things here display spiritual energy that links them to their original owners—the Etruscan king, the martyred Christian—who are resurrected in the text, evoked by the discovery of the objects. The artefacts’ energetic potential is emphasised, too, by their rehabilitation into the world of the present: not only are the Etruscan king’s remains now fertilizer for beans, as explored in the first chapter, but ‘a magnificent *intaglio* in *pietra dura*, one of the rarest and largest of the antique stones that exists’ is in the possession of a shepherd who uses it to ‘[strike] fire on [...] steel’ to light his pipe (*Roba*, 35).

Elsewhere in *Roba di Roma*, Story lays out the spiritual effect of Roman things more directly. The Roman Emperors ‘who were but lay-figures to us at school, mere pegs of names to hang historic robes upon’ when ‘interpreted by the living history of their portraits, the incidental illustrations of the places where they lived and died, and the buildings and monuments they erected, become like the men of yesterday.’ Of these historical figures Story writes, ‘Art has made them our contemporaries’ (*Roba*, 81). Charles Colbert describes this as a ‘spiritualist’ approach to art, in which ‘vital energies are not dissipated but directed toward the person represented’ as ‘arising



from Romantic notions about the confluence of energies flowing from mind to matter, challenged the Kantian concept of the “thing-in-itself”, the inaccessibility of objects to human consciousness’ (59). Spiritualism, Colbert maintains:

Posited an engaged relationship between the observer and the work of art premised on an active imagination capable of projecting itself out into the environment. The upshot of this [...] clairvoyance, was a condition that permitted the dead to speak for themselves; painting and sculpture facilitated the process by creating a locus where psychic forces could gather and manifest their powers. (60)

In *Conversations in a Studio*, Mallett argues that German poetry lacks energy: there is ‘no fire to fuse, and transmute it from substance to spirit’ (281). This critique states, in essence, that German poetry is an energetic dead-end; the artwork fails to become ‘spirit’, to ‘[permit] the dead to speak’. By contrast, Story’s Roman Emperors are resurrected by art to exist in a continuous present; their status as ‘living history’ within the ‘city of visible history’ is enabled by the energetic relationship between the viewer and the art object. Just as energy flowed from ‘mind to matter’, so does it, in the spiritualist context of Rome, flow ‘from substance to spirit’.

### **Anti-Entropic Spiritual Collaboration with the Past**

To expatriate artists in Rome, the relevance of spiritualism was twofold: it mirrored both their experience of Roman things and their professional roles as the mediators and preservers of artistic energy. In this sense, expatriate artists were able to reconnect the aura of the artwork with its original cult value:

[T]he unique value of the ‘authentic’ work of art has its basis in ritual, the location of its original use value. This ritualistic basis, however remote, is still recognizable as secularized ritual even in the most profane forms of the cult of beauty. (Benjamin, *The Work of Art*, 223-4)

The ‘ritualistic basis’ of Roman things, from a spiritualist and artistic perspective, is not at all ‘remote’, as Benjamin finds. Rather, it is restored in both the reception and creation of art in Rome. James Jackson Jarves, whose family were sponsors of D. D.

Home, described a story in which ‘the spirit of Dante visited Giotto, who was his intimate friend, in dreams, and aided him in his allegorical designs of the famous frescoes of ‘Poverty,’ ‘Obedience,’ and ‘Chastity,’<sup>75</sup> as ‘strikingly analogous to many well authenticated marvels which modern spiritualism is pressing home upon the present materialistic age.’<sup>76</sup> This, Colbert writes, ‘divest[s] notions about artistic inspiration of their usual vague, suppositional nature and instead explain[s] them in terms of a Spiritualist psychology’ (214).

Hawthorne makes a similar link in the closing pages of *The Marble Faun*. His explanation of Hilda’s whereabouts during the ‘mysterious interval’ of her disappearance transforms her from a kind of pseudo-medium, who is able to access and channel the aura of artworks into her copies, into a ‘real’ one in the spiritualist sense: the reader is invited to ‘imagine that’ Hilda was able ‘to converse with the great, departed masters of the pencil, and behold the diviner works which they have painted in heavenly colors.’ She is shown new works by the spirits of Perugino and Raphael, and ‘another portrait of Beatrice Cenci’ by Guido (351). Like Giotto in Jarves’ anecdote, Hilda, who throughout the novel is treated as a kind of medium able to channel artistic energy from originals to her ‘spiritual’ copies, attains direct access to the spirits of dead artists.

The spiritualist interpretation of inspiration as a form of spiritual communion with earlier artists was only a moderate modification of the notion of artistic inspiration as participation in the cycling of artistic energy that is explored in the previous chapters in relation to Story, James and Hawthorne. In Story’s words, ‘Inspiration is the inbreathing of an influence from without and above, that can only really live in us and become an essential part of us when the interior nature is in a condition to be fecundated. The individual mind is [...] impregnated by the universal mind’ (*Conversations*, 149). S. B. Britten, introducing Thomas Lake Harris’s *Lyric of the Golden Age* (1856), a work of spiritualist poetry ‘dictated’ to its ‘author’ by the spirits of dead poets, offered a similar description of inspiration in spiritualist terms:

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<sup>75</sup> James Jackson Jarves, *Art Hints: Architecture, Sculpture and Painting* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1855), p. 204.

<sup>76</sup> Jarves, quoted in Colbert, p. 214.

The Universe may be regarded as a grand musical instrument, on which the Divine oratorio of the Creation—revealed in the endless scale of ascending forms and faculties—is improvised. Nature is a many-toned Lyre whose chords are moved by Deity.<sup>77</sup>

As in Story's conception, artistic creation occurs only by the communion of the artist with the 'universal mind'. *Lyric of the Golden Age* employs this approach to offer 'new' works from dead poets including 'Byron, Keats, Shelley, Coleridge and Pollok' (xxviii). In this way it continues and amplifies the conservationist project of the copyists discussed in Chapter Two: it works to actively deny the existence of the death of the artist, and by extension of artistic energy. By resurrecting the dead, and frequently those figures such as the Romantic poets who were associated with originally formulating Rome's relationship to artistic energy, spiritualism in Rome attempted to interrupt the perceived entropy of artistic energy in the city.

The shared project of spiritualism and the artist colony in Rome extended to direct efforts to access and reuse the artistic energy of the past. In 1853, Scottish-American spiritualist Robert Dale Owen published an account of a séance in which, after conversing with Jefferson and Franklin, he 'inquired if any other spirit was present; and Shelley, the poet, an old friend of mine, announced his presence and willingness to answer any questions'.<sup>78</sup> This ability to question the artistic figures of the past intrigued and inspired Ruskin to participate in séances: he rejected the offer made by a medium to connect him to his grandparents, and 'intended instead to communicate with the spirit of Veronese'.<sup>79</sup> Van Akin Burd notes that Ruskin had previously written of an imaginary posthumous meeting with Tintoret, in which 'he would stoop and talk to me there—because I had not understood him' (54). Of the possibility of interviewing Veronese at a séance, Ruskin wrote, '[W]on't I cross examine him!' (54).

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<sup>77</sup> S. B. Britten, 'Introduction' to *A Lyric of the Golden Age*, Thomas L. Harris (New York: Partridge and Brittan, 1856), p. v. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>78</sup> Robert Dale Owen, *The Morning Post*, 10 September 1853, p. 4.

<sup>79</sup> Van Akin Burd, *Christmas Story: John Ruskin's Venetian Letters of 1876-1877* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990), p. 54. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

Spiritualist ambitions were not limited to the summoning and questioning of dead artists, however. Spiritualists used their access to these spirits to channel their energy into new work, as expatriate artists in Rome habitually did as they conceived of the transfer of Roman artistic energy between old and new works. At a séance with Ruskin in London, D. D. Home ‘recited a poem claimed to have been given by the spirit of Southey’.<sup>80</sup> The spirit of Shelley, after attending Owen’s séance in 1853, also appeared at the séances of Thomas Lake Harris. Harris ‘claimed the power to elicit the creative energies of dead poets for literary purposes’ and ‘turned out three spirit-dictated volumes’ in which ‘the spirits of Rousseau, Byron, Coleridge, Keats, and especially Shelley rhymed through Harris’ (Kerr, 16). Harris claimed to see the spirits ‘unveiled before him’; in order to transmit their verses to him they either ‘moved his hand while he was partially entranced, addressed him in audible voices, or communicated their thoughts through cerebral impressions’ (viii-ix).

The spirits of the Romantic poets whose ‘notions about the confluence of energies flowing from mind to matter’ made Rome such a key site for nineteenth-century artists who aimed to extract that same energy, were particularly prone to appearing in séances to produce new works (Colbert, 60). The Romantics’ own practice of ‘spontaneous creation’ was exhibited by mediums like Harris who performed ‘automatic writing’ in the séance, a practice in which ‘the medium writes involuntarily, sometimes in a state of trance, and often on subjects which he is not thinking about, does not expect, and does not like’ (A. Wallace, 207). In Harris’ *Lyric of the Golden Age*, the notion of inherited or received inspiration is emphasised by noting, of the portion attributed to Keats, that ‘To him the Spirit of the Future came, / And kissed his sleeping eyes with lips of flame, / And he, inspired in heart, made Poetry / His mistress [...] That mild, sweet Gentleness, was named of old / Panthea’ (310-11). Harris’ poem creates layer upon layer of receptive inspiration, in such a way as to evoke the continuous cycling of energy in which the nineteenth-century expatriate artists of Rome aspired to participate.

*Lyric of the Golden Age* repeatedly asserts continuity in the face of anxiety about loss. Not only does it resurrect the spirits of lost writers, and construct and participate in images of cycling patterns of artistic inspiration, it also denounces

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<sup>80</sup> Madame Dunglas Home, *The Gift of D. D. Home* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Trübner, 1890), p. 19.

broader scientific fears regarding entropy. Alongside images of continuous creativity, including Byron pouring ‘from out his burning mind / The seething torrents of unresting soul’ and Keats standing ‘beside / The waking figures of his Grecian urn’, the poem insists, ‘There are no solitudes, / No burnt, extinguished suns, / No blood-red bleeding spheres, / No blasted, blighted earths’ (111; 89). This flat denial of the possibility of entropy directly addresses ‘the loss of faith in *recurrence*, the loss of any assurance of “eternal return,” the recognition that oblivion is not only the matter of the past but of the future’ that Gillian Beer identified as the response to mid-nineteenth-century thermodynamic theory regarding the heat death of the sun.<sup>81</sup> The project of spiritualism was anti-entropic, like that of the expatriate artists in Rome. It aligned both the scientific and the artistic in its efforts to deny the existence or possibility loss.

In efforts to produce anti-entropic artworks, spiritualist practitioners used ‘spirit drawing’: like automatic writing, the practice of ‘spirit drawing’ drew on the energy of the dead to produce art that was denied loss, both self-evidently in its very existence, and in the concerns of its content. W. M. Wilkinson’s *Spirit Drawings: A Personal Narrative* (1858) describes the creation, during a séance in which his wife channelled the spirit of their dead son, of a drawing of ‘a house with fountains before it, and over the door is a cross with rays proceeding from it.’ This, he believes ‘represented the state of our dear son in the spiritual world, and that the ladder related to his progress in Divine knowledge and love; and that when the topmost stage of it was reached, it would be a sign to us that he had entered upon a higher state, which would be represented by his inhabiting a more beautiful house’.<sup>82</sup> Like Harris’ rejection of ‘burnt, extinguished suns’, Wilkinson’s spirit house is a statement of belief in spiritual endurance, complete with fountains that are symbols of continuity; the pattern established by the beautiful house that is followed by another ‘more beautiful house’ unfolds like the layers of ‘inspiration’ described in *Lyric of the Golden Age*: from the Goddess to Keats to Harris and finally to the reader.

In describing the practice of spirit drawing, Wilkinson establishes the ‘receptive creativity’ of the spirit drawer in opposition to the work of ‘ordinary’ artists

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<sup>81</sup> Gillian Beer, *Open Fields: Science in Cultural Encounter* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 225.

<sup>82</sup> W. M. Wilkinson, *Spirit Drawings*, pp. 18-19. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

and writers: ‘Poets, artists, and those who draw most highly on the imagination or ideal faculty, can tell us of the labour bestowed in the process’; this, he argues, ‘does not cohere with the [...] faculty of involuntary movement of the hand’ of the spirit drawer who has no preconceived idea of their subject. ‘Where is the imagination here? If it be imagination, where has it been recognized before? What are the instances of it?’ There is an anatomical difference, Wilkinson argues, between the two methods of creation. The results ‘of the ordinary mode’ of drawing are the products of ‘both the cerebellum, which is the seat of the will or the affections of man, and of the cerebrum, where dwells his intellect, his judging power. But here [in spirit drawing] are effects produced, direct, as it were, from the cerebellum or will, or at all events not knowingly through the cerebrum, or conscious power’ (Wilkinson, 42). ‘Where is the artist,’ Wilkinson asks, ‘who sits down to his paper without an idea or an image of the picture he is to draw, who measures not with his mind and with his eye the combinations of his forms, and their fitness to the general design?’ (40-41).

Though Wilkinson evidently believed this unconscious form of creative production was the antithesis of the work of the artist, the expatriates in Rome held it up as an ideal in their attempts to channel and recycle artistic energy in practices both directly and indirectly linked to the spiritualism Wilkinson practiced. Hawthorne’s Hilda produces her copies as though ‘the spirits of the old masters were hovering over Hilda, and guiding her delicate white hand’, and in a manner that appears to bypass the ‘cerebrum, or conscious power’: ‘She saw, no, not saw, but felt through and through a picture’ (*Marble Faun*, 47). Story’s Mallett, too, echoes Peabody Hawthorne’s process in his production of ‘original’ sculpture: ‘Inspiration is the inbreathing of an influence from without and above [...] The individual mind is, as it were, the matrix, which is impregnated by the universal mind [...] the idea suddenly comes upon us without our will’ (*Conversations*, 149). The artist, ‘obeys somewhat which he can neither understand nor govern. A secret force guides and moves him. Yes! Great genius is, I believe, unconscious of its power’ (*Conversations*, 150).

Story himself appears to have appropriated the spiritualist receptive technique of creation in the writing of his *Proportions of the Human Figure* (1864), which presented ‘a mystical theory of human proportions’ (Colbert, 64). It drew from ‘the ancient Cabala of numbers and symbols, [...] the famous Canon of Polycletus,’ and

‘the principal systems of Proportion in use in ancient and modern times’.<sup>83</sup> In *Conversations* Mallett claims, like Story, to have identified ‘the system of proportion among the ancients’, that seems to be a reference to Story’s own *Proportions* and thus links the figure of Mallet to Story. After years of attempts to understand this system, Mallet glanced at ‘a small copy of the so-called Egyptian Antinous of the Vatican’ and ‘instantly and unconsciously, without an effort of my will, a solution dawned upon me [...] I had discovered the secret’ (480). The ambiguous reference to the ‘Egyptian Antinous’ in this account situates Story’s *Proportions* in a tradition of using ancient systems of proportion in sculpture;<sup>84</sup> however the nature of the inspiration he describes also suggests that Mallet’s involuntary creative insight and subsequent creation is a form of spirit writing: it conforms to Wilkinson’s definition that requires ‘effects [to be] produced, direct, as it were, from the cerebellum or will, or at all events not knowingly through the cerebrum, or conscious power’ (42). As Barrett Browning described, Story had ‘a sort of undeveloped faculty of [...] writing with the pencil mystically,’<sup>85</sup> and *Conversations* casts *Proportions* as a product of these attempts. So, like Harris’ *Lyric of a Golden Age*, Story’s *Proportions* functions as a spiritually-inspired artwork that is itself concerned with explaining and developing art’s project on earth: the accessing of spiritual artistic energy thus enables the creation of more authentic art.

Story’s *Proportions* bridged the divide between spirit writing and drawing that attributed authorship of the works to the spirits of the deceased, such as in Harris’ and Wilkinson’s cases, and ‘original’ works created by and attributed to living artists who were nonetheless influenced by spiritualism in Rome. These were products of closely linked practices, and both varieties of artwork tended to focus, in content, on the nature and ideals of spiritualism. Colbert identifies spiritualist concerns in Story’s *Sibyl*, who ‘possesses the ability to peer through time’ and suggests that the figure is

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<sup>83</sup> William Wetmore Story, *The Proportions of the Human Figure* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1864), p. 14.

<sup>84</sup> Molly Swetnam-Burland describes the *Antinous* as a key example of Roman sculpture an Egyptian ‘canon of proportions’. See Molly Swetnam-Burland, ‘Egyptian-style Monuments’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture*, pp. 307-322 (p. 318).

<sup>85</sup> Barrett Browning to Arabella Moulton-Barrett, 15 August 1853, *The Brownings’ Correspondence, Volume 19*, pp. 223–234 (p. 225).

based on the abolitionist, and spiritualist, Sojourner Truth, who Harriet Beecher Stowe described as ‘having a strong sphere’ and about whom Stowe told Story while she was staying with him in Rome (64-5). Beecher Stowe wrote that, when she later returned to Rome, ‘Mr Story requested me to come and repeat to him the history of Sojourner Truth, saying that the conception had never left him. I did so; and a day or two after, he showed me the clay model of the Libyan Sibyl.’<sup>86</sup> Hosmer’s *Puck*, Colbert posits, is a depiction of the ‘spirit some three feet high’ that, in Barrett Browning’s description of Hosmer’s vision, ‘came running, dancing to her from the furthest end of the room close up to her knees, when as she stooped towards it, it vanished.’<sup>87</sup> Adam Roberts argues that from 1864, the year of Barrett Browning’s death, ‘the bringing back of the dead becomes an acutely personal issue’<sup>88</sup> for Robert Browning, and that this manifests itself in his Roman poem *The Ring and the Book* (1868-9), which is ‘explicitly figured as a séance, a ghostly haunting, its ten speakers called back from the dead by Browning’s occult power to tell their tales’ (113).

Overlooked in these discussions of the artistic legacy of spiritualism in Rome during this period is Hosmer’s *Clasped Hands of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning* (1853), which encapsulates Hosmer’s spiritualist vision of the unique combination of artistic and spiritual communication afforded to artists who participated in the recycling of Roman energy, and is discussed in the following section.

### **The Presence of Loss: Harriet Hosmer’s *Clasped Hands of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning***

‘The history of the hands is very brief,’ reported Hosmer; ‘In the winter of 1853, my second winter in Rome, I made the personal acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Browning. I then conceived the idea of casting their hands, and asked Mrs. Browning if she would

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<sup>86</sup> Olive Gilbert (ed), *Narrative of Sojourner Truth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 170.

<sup>87</sup> Barrett Browning to Henrietta Cook, 4 March 1854, *The Brownings’ Correspondence*, Volume 20, pp. 123–129 (p. 125).

<sup>88</sup> Adam Roberts, ‘Browning, the dramatic monologue and the resuscitation of the dead’, in *The Victorian Supernatural*, pp. 109-127 (119).



consent. “Yes,” she said, “provided you will cast them, but I will not sit for the *formatore*.” Consequently I did the casting myself” (Carr, 92). At its most basic visual level, the image of hands cut off at the wrist, as the Brownings’ are in Hosmer’s sculpture, was one associated strongly with the *séance*, during which it was commonplace to witness the materialization of hands. Home describes a *séance* in which ‘a beautifully-formed feminine hand became distinctly visible to all the party present. [...] In a short time, the fleshy and delicately-formed arm became visible up to the elbow’ (101). Alfred Russell Wallace recalls ‘the appearance of hands which lift small objects, yet are not the hands of anyone one present’ and ‘direct writing by a luminous detached hand’ (182). Barrett Browning described spiritual hands that ‘did everything you asked them to do’ and ‘took Mr Jerves’s handkerchief & knotted it in so ingenious a manner as would be hard for a man’s craft.’<sup>89</sup> She wrote to dismiss her sister’s scepticism about spiritualist reports of ‘the hand seen alone’, independent of the body: ‘The fact is the hand is not mutilated. It is our sight which is mutilated, into seeing only the hand.’<sup>90</sup> Alison Chapman notes of these apparitions that ‘[i]n the half-light of the *séance*, the hands are sighted as an authentic sign of mediumship’.<sup>91</sup> Hosmer’s representation of the detached hands of the two celebrated writers had distinctly spiritual overtones, suggesting that not only were the original owners of the two hands ‘authentic’ mediums in the realm of art, but so too was the artist whose hands touched theirs in the creation of the work.

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<sup>89</sup> Barrett Browning to Arabella Moulton-Barrett, 15 May 1855, *The Brownings’ Correspondence, Volume 21*, ed. by Philip Kelley, Scott Lewis, Edward Hagan, Joseph Phelan & Rhian Williams (Winfield: Wedgestone Press, 2014), pp. 155–160 (p. 158). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>90</sup> Barrett Browning to Arabella Moulton-Barrett, 20 December 1854 *The Brownings’ Correspondence, Volume 21*, pp. 33–40 (p. 35).

<sup>91</sup> Alison Chapman, ‘Risorgimenti’, p. 80.



3 Harriet Hosmer, *Clasped Hands of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, 1853

Colbert argues that the *Hands* ‘embodies the virtues of marital fidelity and ideal delicacy of the structure and refinement of form’;<sup>92</sup> the sculpture is described in *The Marble Faun* as ‘symbolizing the individuality and heroic union of two high, poetic lives’ (94). However, the spiritualist beliefs and practices of both the sculptor and at least one of the models places an emphasis on artistic communication or transmission rather than the stasis of marriage or union. (At the time the *Hands* were cast, in fact, Browning himself had not yet hardened against spiritualist claims: in the years before the Ealing séance of 1855, ‘he was open to spiritualism’ according to Markus, or at very least viewed it with ‘humorous indulgence’ rather than antipathy.<sup>93</sup> A touch from a spiritual hand in a séance was a profound form of communication across previously untraversable boundaries; Barrett Browning’s insistence on having the cast made by Hosmer rather than the ‘Formatore’ indicates that she considered touch an intimate form of access in itself. Winter notes that ‘Victorian bodies were in fluid interaction with each other, with or without the benefit of a physical touch. Victorians were fascinated by the idea that one person’s mind could reach into the intimate parts of someone else—the mind, the body, the home or the past’; while ‘mesmeric passes [...] were just shy of a touch’, spiritualism offered immediate touch and promised a greater degree of access and intimacy (Winter, 137). This idea is embodied in the finished bronze, which is a depiction of the privileged touch (and

<sup>92</sup> Charles Colbert, *A Measure of Perfection, Phrenology and the Fine Arts in America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), pp. 325-6.

<sup>93</sup> Markus, 237; Daniel Karlin, *Browning’s Hatreds* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 48. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

access) granted not only to spouses but to fellow artists. Hosmer's attention to the texture of the hands indicates that her interest was in evoking as closely as possible the realities of physical touch, rather than the ideal or symbolic. In this sense, the work is a manifestation of the project she facetiously suggested was undertaken to cast the abnormally-large boots of the subject whose friends rejected her attempts to idealize him (Carr, 301-10). The *Hands*, with their evocatively textural skin, veins and bones, invite the viewer to touch them, an act that in turn not only mimics the action portrayed in the sculpture, but that of the sculptor in creating the work.

By portraying artistic touch on multiple levels, both physical and spiritual, Hosmer produced yet another provocation to those critics who 'ingeniously discover traces of the sculptor's hand where they do not exist' (Carr, 372). Furthermore, she placed the critical debate around authenticity in sculpture into a conversation about communication not between artists and critics, but between artists and other artists. Heather Tilley describes how 'tactile sense became crucial to the ways in which the Victorians conceived of reality, and touch — increasingly delineated as both a passive and active sense — became imbued with new social, psychological, and emotional resonances' (6). In 1855, Alexander Bain suggested that touch was 'not merely a knowledge-giving sense, as they all are, but a source of ideas and conceptions of the kind that remain in the intellect and embrace the outer world.'<sup>94</sup> The sculpture itself acts as an embodiment of, and response to, Gottfried Herder's impassioned defense of sculpture as an art of potential and communication in his essay *Sculpture: Some observations on form and shape from Pygmalion's creative dream* (1778), in which touch is presented as the primary sense both of comprehension and imagination: 'The hand never touches the whole, can never apprehend a form all at once, except for the perfectly enclosed form of the sphere [...]. [T]he hand's touching is never completed, never comes to an end, it is always in a certain sense endless.'<sup>95</sup> Herder's argument, first 'that touch is important in appreciating sculptures because it replicates the artist's experience,' and that 'we grasp the unity *and* the expressive meaning of sculpture through *identifying* with sculpted human form', relates the communicative, imaginative possibilities represented by Hosmer's *Hands* to the same sense of endless

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<sup>94</sup> Alexander Bain, *The Senses and the Intellect* (London: Parker, 1855), p. 171.

<sup>95</sup> Gottfried Herder, quoted in Potts, p. 31.

potential ('the hand's touching is never completed') that both artists and spiritualists in Rome sought to access.<sup>96</sup>

Thus, when Marcia Pointon identifies an 'inherent ambiguity' in the bronze, observing that 'neither (assuming they were right-handed) could write while thus physically in contact',<sup>97</sup> she ignores the vast creative potential that Hosmer and Barrett Browning both associated with manual touch. Barrett Browning herself made explicit the link between spiritual hands and her own writing practice, as Chapman notes, she associated the spiritual manifestation of hands in the séance with 'writerly agency'; 'the fleshliness of the [spiritual] hands signifies their veracity: they look like her own writing hand'.<sup>98</sup> The spiritual touch depicted indicates its own form of intense artistic communication: 'a source of ideas and conceptions' that was experienced as anti-entropic. Like the medium described by Alfred Russell Wallace who could 'hear by means of the palms of her hands' and 'read without the assistance of her eyes, merely with the tips of the fingers, which she passed rapidly over the page that she wished to read', the poets are portrayed by Hosmer as both reading and writing through touch (A. R. Wallace, 69). The sculpture is a depiction of the spiritual nature of the artist's process. As the spiritualist movement as a whole was inextricably bound up in the fear of loss, Hosmer's spiritualist sculpture is a paradoxical representation of the presence of loss as much as it is a portrayal of communication and resistance to decay. Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1850) balances preoccupations with the embrace of the living and with the threat of separation through death. Sonnet XXXVI is a meditation on transience, permanence, touch, hands and sculpture: opening, 'When we met first and loved, I did not build / Upon the event with marble', and giving voice to 'A still renewable fear' that 'these enclasped hands should never hold, / This mutual kiss drop down between us both / As an unowned thing, once the lips being cold.'<sup>99</sup> Like Hosmer's bronze, Barrett Browning's concerns here are bodily: it is the lack of corporeal presence she pre-emptively mourns in her sonnet.

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<sup>96</sup> Rachel Zuckert, "Sculpture and Touch: Herder's Aesthetics of Sculpture," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 67, no. 3 (2009), pp. 285-99 (pp. 288-9).

<sup>97</sup> Marcia Pointon, 'Casts, Imprints, and the Deathliness of Things: Artifacts at the Edge,' *The Art Bulletin*, 96:2 (2014), pp. 170-195 (p. 188).

<sup>98</sup> Alison Chapman, 'Risorgimenti', p. 80.

<sup>99</sup> Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Sonnets from the Portuguese and Other Poems* (New York: Dover Publications, 1992), p. 38.

Hosmer's *Hands* are a material answer of certainty to the material concerns of her subject, that nonetheless evoke the same fear of absence.

Gabrielle Gopinath highlights two moments in *The Marble Faun* when hands are used to suggest the absent body: first, Kenyon's sculpture of the 'small, beautifully shaped hand' of Hilda, and second, the 'marble hand [...] still appended to its arm' of the newly uncovered Venus de Medici, which, when properly assembled, covers the body in a position that 'showed that she retained her modest instincts to the last' (79). In both instances, the hands suggest powerful sexual impulses towards the absent body of Hilda: the naked *Venus* emerging in her place as Kenyon seeks her, and the 'lovely fingers' of the model of Hilda's hand, with their suggestion of 'virgin warmth' that move both Miriam and the sculptor to want to touch the hand, and through it, its model. In her discussion of Hilda's marble hand, Gopinath suggests that its 'relationship to the absent body of the beloved is both metonymic and metaphoric; as a vagrant part, it stands as the body's token and indexical representative, but it also serves as a sign that alludes to the body as a whole' (78). The description of Hilda's marble hand in *The Marble Faun*, which is compared to Hosmer's statue by Miriam, acts as a reading of Hosmer's disembodied *Hands*. *The Hands of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, then, evokes both presence and loss, suggesting the absent bodies of the hands' owners even as it insists upon their permanent presence.

A final indication of Hosmer's awareness of the fraught relationship her sculpture embodied between spiritual continuity and entropy is given by a poem she wrote after Robert Browning's death in 1889:

'Parted by death,' we say—they, in that land  
Where suns spring, blossom and decay,  
Crowned with the halo of a new content,  
Our little planet in the firmament  
All lost to view, smile at our words,  
And hand in hand wend their eternal way. (Carr, 323)

In a recognizable spiritualist formulation of the continuity of the soul after death, Hosmer recalls her own sculpture in her depiction of the Brownings 'hand in hand wend[ing] their eternal way' through a landscape that, on all sides, is threatened by entropy. The suns of the afterlife 'spring' and 'blossom' but also 'decay'; and as the poets themselves go on, it is 'our little planet' that must therefore be 'lost to view'.

The fear of entropy that motivated artistic and spiritualist endeavors in Rome was omnipresent and undeniable, visible even in works that strove to deny it.

This built-in ambivalence reflects the tensions between Hosmer's spiritualism and the eventual emotional response of Browning himself to spiritualism's promises: Daniel Karlin finds that in Home, Browning saw 'the poet's degradation, a kind of alchemy in reverse: the magical transformation of gold to dust and ashes' (66). Of Home's performance at the séance in Ealing Browning wrote: 'hardly can you conceive a poorer business—as for 'eloquence,' 'beauty,' 'poetry,' and so on—I should be curious to know the meridian in which these qualities are attributed to such a holding-forth'.<sup>100</sup> In the same vein, 'Mr. H. says he is "twenty," but properly adds, that he looks much older'.<sup>101</sup> In both performance and appearance, then, Home—and by extension spiritualism—was an embodiment of degradation and decay and what Karlin calls 'troubling instability' (56). Spiritualism for Browning was a pure manifestation of entropy.<sup>102</sup>

#### IV. 'ALL THE GRAVEN IMAGES WE HAVE MADE [...] PURSUE US': GALATEA AND THE FANTASY OF ANTI-ENTROPIC ARTISTIC RESURRECTION

'Wherever I walk, I come upon familiar objects in an unfamiliar world; everything is just as I imagined it, yet everything is new', wrote Goethe of his initial impression of Rome. This experience was, for Goethe, like Pygmalion's encounter with the living, breathing Galatea, 'whom he had fashioned exactly after his dreams': 'how different was the living woman from the sculptured stone' (129). Though Goethe's Roman recognition became the template for first-time visitors' experiences of Rome,

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<sup>100</sup> Browning, quoted in Karlin, *Browning's Hatreds*, p. 51.

<sup>101</sup> Browning, quoted in Karlin, *Browning's Hatreds*, p. 52.

<sup>102</sup> The relationship of entropy to spiritualism is also described in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Notebooks*: after attending a séance in Florence, he writes of the medium's performance, 'there is a lack of substance in her talk, a want of gripe, a delusive show, a sentimental surface, with no bottom beneath it. The same sort of thing has struck me in all the poetry and prose that I have read from spiritual sources'. This is a return to the imagery of things—of shells without contents—as a way of exploring entropic spiritualism and the empty art it produced. See Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Notebooks*, p. 399.

including those whose reactions were explored in the previous chapter, there were many in the second half of the nineteenth-century who found that their experience of Rome was less of an inanimate force awakening and more of the reverse: a life-force dwindling. ‘Rome has ceased to exist,’ wrote American artist Joseph Pennell in 1894. ‘The Rome that I even saw years ago is gone. [...] The Borghese Palace is like a bric-a-brac shop, all Old Rome is labelled and tagged like a museum [...]. Rome only remains in the photograph shops, and it’s too sickening for life’.<sup>103</sup> As charted in the successive editions of Story’s *Roba di Roma*, Rome’s transformation during and after the Risorgimento left even those who were perceived by later generations to have experienced ‘the old Roman days’ feeling alienated by the city’s modernisation and change (James, *William Wetmore Story*, 285).

Though the Pygmalion and Galatea myth was no longer an analogy for the experience of the entropic Rome of the second half of the century, expatriates in the city nonetheless held on to the resurrection story and employed it in their work as a form of active resistance to decay. The Pygmalion story permeated nineteenth-century culture so thoroughly that, Essaka Joshua observes, it was ‘retold and reworked during the nineteenth century more times than in any other’;<sup>104</sup> and Gail Marshall notes that Victorian culture so ‘abounded in examples of the influence of the archetypal Pygmalion’ that Havelock Ellis’ *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* used the term ‘Pygmalionism’ to describe the sexual disorder of men who fell in love with statues.<sup>105</sup> In the expatriate artistic community in Rome, however, the myth was invoked not only to describe instances of statue-love such as those explored in the first chapter in relation to James’ *Last of the Valerii* (1874) and in Hawthorne’s and Story’s accounts of the excavation of the Porta Portese Venus, but to suggest the final stage of their project of recycling Roman energy. The story of Galatea is ‘in many respects the most potent instance of the thought-thing dichotomy’ established by Anna Jameson’s assertion that ‘sculpture is a thought and a thing,’ writes Michael Hatt; ‘Moreover, the Pygmalion myth introduces a variation on Anna Jameson’s theme: the distinction

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<sup>103</sup> Joseph Pennell, quoted in Shelly Jarenski, *Immersive Words*, p. 117.

<sup>104</sup> Essaka Joshua, *Pygmalion and Galatea: The history of a narrative in English literature*, (Burlington: Ashgate, 2001), p. xx.

<sup>105</sup> Gail Marshall, *Actresses on the Victorian Stage: Feminine Performance and the Galatea Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 17. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

between the body as an object and the body as the vehicle of experience, outwardly beautiful thing and inwardly active subject.’<sup>106</sup> In a community in which Roman things were experienced as thoughts, things and the middle quality (a quality described in Hatt’s terms as ‘the vehicle of experience’), the living Galatea was the logical conclusion to the successful project of energy recycling. Having accessed and channelled the artistic energy of the Roman past, artists explored the idea of bringing their artworks literally to life, in the manner of the spiritualist medium who animates musical instruments or is able to bring about the materialization of hands.<sup>107</sup>

The combined influences of spiritualism and the Pygmalion myth offered artists the opportunity to fulfil the energetic potential of ruins by completing the works. Hawthorne, on viewing the dismembered body of the Porta Portese Venus, wrote that, ‘They ought to sift every handful of earth [...] for the nose and the missing hand [...] [T]he effect would be like the reappearance of a divinity upon earth’ (*Notebooks*, 517). The Pygmalion myth, bolstered by spiritualist practice, promised exactly this kind of resurrection. Story’s Mallett describes a naturalist who, having ‘found the half of a fossil fish’ was ‘haunt[ed]’ by his desire to ‘supply the other half’ until eventually he went to sleep and ‘in his dreams he resolved it to his complete satisfaction’ (478). This example of ‘receptive genius’ fulfilling the potential of the incomplete fossil not only echoes the way in which ‘instantly and unconsciously, without an effort of my will,’ Mallett, and perhaps Story, ‘discovered the secret’ of the spiritually-inspired *Proportions of the Human Figure*, but also suggests a spiritual solution to Hawthorne’s desire to see the complete body of the *Venus* restored and thereby revived (480).

Mallett denies ‘any truth in the myth of Pygmalion’ since an artist cannot ‘be enamored of what he has done’ because ‘he, more than any one, must feel its shortcomings’ (310). However, at another point in *Conversations*, he entertains the possibility of statues coming to life, recalling an ‘old superstition’ in which ‘all the graven images we have made, and all the likenesses of things in the heavens, or the earth, or the waters under earth, will, it has been said, become endowed with life, and

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<sup>106</sup> Michael Hatt, ‘Thoughts and Things: Sculpture and the Victorian Nude’, in *Exposed: The Victorian Nude*, ed. by Alison Smith (London: Tate Publishing, 2001), pp. 27-49 (pp. 41-42).

<sup>107</sup> See Home, *Incidents*, Wilkinson, *Spirit Drawings*, and Houdini p. 41 for descriptions of spiritual music during séances.



pursue us, and haunt us, and torment us' (305). This image in which the animation of artworks is described in nightmarish, ghostly terms, nonetheless suggests the energetic potential stored within the works: the energy of the animated artworks has the potential to overpower the energy of the artist.

Marshall notes that Story's peer and Hosmer's mentor John Gibson 'acted out the part of a modern Pygmalion when he created, and then temporarily refused to part with' his statue *The Tinted Venus* (17). Gibson was widely criticised for his experiment in colouring the statue, which removed the purifying effect of the white marble, which was, argued Henry Weekes, 'one of the peculiarities that remove [sculpture] from common Nature, that the most vulgarly constituted mind may contemplate it without its causing any feeling of a sensuous kind.'<sup>108</sup> The *Art Journal* described the colouring of marble 'as a departure from the original high purpose of sculpture [...] its end being to idealise rather than to realise.'<sup>109</sup> In 'realising' rather than 'idealising' his *Venus*, Gibson himself experienced a 'feeling of a sensuous kind' towards his creation: 'At moments I forget that I was gazing at my own production; there I sat before her, long and often. How was I ever to part with her!'<sup>110</sup> The controversy around the Gibson's statue was satirized in F. Anstey's comic novella *The Tinted Venus: A Farcical Romance* (1885), in which a young man 'in pursuit of pleasure' places a ring on the finger of a statue and later experiences 'pleasure in pursuit' as the figure comes to life and follows him through London, demanding marriage: 'the living touch of a mortal hand upon one of my sacred images called me from my rest, and [has] given me power to animate this marble shell', the statue announces.<sup>111</sup>

Peabody Hawthorne extends the anti-entropic potential of Galatea from the scale of the individual artwork to that of an entire city. Her description of Florence as a static, entropic place in which '[t]here is a pause in all rare achievement' finds that it

would not be surprising, but far less strange than the present state of things, if all the masters in Art, in State, and in Science, who stand

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<sup>108</sup> Henry Weekes, *Lectures on Art* (London: Bickers and Son, 1880), p. 169.

<sup>109</sup> *Art Journal*, 'Tinted Sculpture', July 1862, p. 161.

<sup>110</sup> Gibson, quoted in Marshall, p. 18.

<sup>111</sup> F. Anstey, *The Tinted Venus: A Farcical Romance* (New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1898), p. 3; p. 27; p. 49.

clothed in white marble in the Court of the Uffizzi, were to descend from their pedestals and walk [...] They would be more fitting and proper to the place than those persons whom we meet to-day. The latter are, as it were, empty chrysalids—deserted shells. (468)

Peabody Hawthorne's image of walking, animated statues not only disrupts the 'pause' she perceived in Florence, but by resurrecting the 'masters in Art, in State, and in Science', she reverses the city's entropy.

Marina Warner argues that Galatea 'mediates between the world of image-making and the creation of life'; 'When she steps out of illusion into reality through her creator's desire, she fulfils the delusory promise of art itself, the nearest equivalent to generation in the single, uncoupled manner of the gods that a man can reach'.<sup>112</sup> In this way, the Galatea myth promised to complete the final stage in a system of recycling artistic energy through stages of life, art, and finally back to life. In the winter of 1863-1864, D. D. Home aimed to combine his spiritual powers with the artistic potential of sculpture in order to create 'a statue into which he proposed instilling life,' an endeavour that would not only mediate 'between the world of image-making and the creation of life' but attempt to combine them entirely (Weld, 177). 'It is the great seduction of illusionistic art,' Warner writes, 'conveyed by the figure of the dreamed model, muse and living doll, that through art man can become a lord of creation' (240). Home's living statue—had he ever completed it—would have represented, therefore, the ultimate answer to the problem of the dissolution of artistic energy in Rome: in his project to become 'a lord of creation', Home was proposing that he could so successfully channel artistic energy that it would overrule entropy entirely.

Home moved to Rome to pursue a career as a sculptor in the winter of 1863, succumbing to, in the words of his wife in *D. D. Home, His Life and Mission*, 'the longing' that 'possessed him to attempt turning to account the keen artistic perceptions he possessed' (204). This description already links, in its vocabulary, the spiritual and the artistic, leaning twice on the term 'possessed' to describe Home's relationship to art. Home, too, had a history of merging spiritualism and, specifically,

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<sup>112</sup> Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (London: Picador, 1897), p. 228. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

sculpture: one of his earliest spiritual experiences, he writes in *Incidents in My Life*, was a vision of ‘the bust of [his] mother’ following her death (22).

Home had well-established connections with many of the expatriates based in Florence—notably Jarves and Thomas Adolphus Trollope—but was less well connected with those in Rome.<sup>113</sup> He obtained a letter of introduction to Gibson from English painter Thomas Heaphy, but appears to have been rebuffed, since he also contacted Story, asking to join his studio (*D. D. Home, His Life*, 211). Browning, using a common misspelling of Home’s name, wrote to Isa Blagden that, Hume went to Rome with a letter from Mr Mitchel to Story, asking to become his pupil: ‘Story refused’ but ‘of course Hume immediately wrote to England [...] that S *had* taken him as a pupil—it is Story’s own business,—he chooses to take this dung-ball into his hand for a minute, and he will get more & more smeared.’<sup>114</sup> Whether rebuffed or in some way adopted by Story, Home was reported to have achieved moderate success as a sculptor. Porter notes that in the sixties ‘Home’s name appears again and again in the correspondence of well-known people in England and in the English colonies in Florence and Rome’ (5). Houdini stated that, having ‘set up a studio in Italy’ Home ‘gave his attention to sculpture between séances and “sold busts at prices quite out of proportion to their artistic merits”’ (40-41). Sherrie Lynn Lyons suggests that the purpose of Home’s foray into sculpture was to create tools with which to fool the attendees of his séances: ‘A person who had visited Home’s studio in Rome claimed it was filled with sculpted hands. It would have been possible for Home to substitute wax hands on the top of the table, leaving his real hands free to do whatever they wanted’ (S. L. Lyons, 95).

Claims regarding Home’s achievements in sculpture, in his Roman studio at least, are rendered less plausible by the fact that ‘on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January, 1864, he was summoned before the chief of the Roman police, subjected to a long interrogatory, and finally ordered, on the ground of sorcery, to quit Rome within three days’, and regardless of the extent of his artistic attainments, Home’s project of ‘instilling life’ into a statue was certainly left unfinished (*D. D. Home, His Life*, 207). However, this

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<sup>113</sup> See Thomas Adolphus Trollope, *What I Remember* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1887), p. 380.

<sup>114</sup> Robert Browning to Isa Blagden, 19<sup>th</sup> Dec 1863, Letter 67, *Dearest Isa: Robert Browning's Letters to Isabella Blagden* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1953), pp. 182-3.

task was taken up, in a different way, by Home's—possibly reluctant, though certainly credulous—Roman acquaintance, Story, who resorted to fiction to examine the ways in which spiritualism could aid the resurrection of Roman energy through art.

Story's short story, 'A Modern Magician', published three years after Home's eviction from Rome, describes the relationship between an American invalid in Rome and a spiritual medium named Marco Curio. The original description of this medium as someone 'who has not [...] a particularly good reputation [...] who is devoted to magic and spiritualism', suggests that Story's relationship to Home, as both a believer in spiritualism and, out of loyalty to Browning, someone obliged to keep the medium at a distance, could have informed the portrait.<sup>115</sup> '[T]here was something about his physiognomy and in his manner which repelled me, at the same time that a certain oddity and frank whimsicality attracted me,' says the narrator's doctor of Curio (65). This recalls Browning's assessment of Home, who during the Ealing séance displayed 'the manners, endearments and other peculiarities of a very little child', a performance Browning found 'unmanly' and responded to with 'disgust'.<sup>116</sup>

'A Modern Magician' brings together Story's philosophy of art, music, time and Roman energy in the story of his American protagonist's spiritual encounter with the Roman gods, who, as in Heine's 'The Gods in Exile', are revealed as living on in disguise. Following an attack of 'typhus fever of great severity', the narrator finds himself in a condition in which the 'boundaries of the real and the ideal, or rather of the actual and the imaginative worlds, were then obliterated' (59). In a state that already recalls the conditions of both nineteenth-century neoclassicism and spiritualism, the narrator travels to Rome, where he feels

the figures of the past, dim shadows of the ancient days, moving about me in their old haunts [...] . I should not have been startled, such was the condition of my mind, to meet at times the figures of the ancient poets, orators, and emperors, or even the ancient gods themselves[.] (67)

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<sup>115</sup> Story, 'A Modern Magician', in *Tales from Blackwood: Being the Most Famous Series of Stories Ever*, ed. by H. Chalmers Roberts (New York: Doubleday, 1903), pp. 68-69. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>116</sup> See Daniel Karlin, *Browning's Hatreds*, pp. 55-58 for descriptions of Home's physicality during his séances and Brownings response to this 'transgression of natural boundaries (of age and gender)'.

Like Story himself, Peabody Hawthorne and others, the narrator is susceptible to the ‘magnetizing’ effects of Rome, in which continuous Roman energy is felt in the form of ‘haunting’. On the advice of his doctor, the narrator seeks out Marco Curio and asks to be magnetized as part of on-going treatment following his illness. During his magnetic experiences with Curio, the narrator experiences visions of being surrounded by Roman gods, which are dismissed as dreams until, at the end of the narrative, Curio introduces the narrator to his family: one by one, these characters reveal themselves to be living Roman deities—including Marco Curio, whose real name, it is finally understood, is Mercury. While the Count in *The Last of the Valerii* is overpowered by his erotic encounter with the energetic excavated *Juno*, in Story’s tale, his American protagonist first dreams of, and then truly encounters, embodiments of Roman energy that are truly revived. Elzbieta Foeller-Pituch, in her discussion of *The Last of the Valerii*, suggests that the Count’s Roman identity is what renders him susceptible to the power of the *Juno*: ‘This sort of thing does not happen to their Americans, who may observe and even sympathize, but cannot actually feel the power of classical myth in their own psyches. This is a nineteenth-century and peculiarly American interpretation of the classical influence--Americans are immune to the mythological temptations of the Old World.’<sup>117</sup> ‘A Modern Magician’ counters this argument by presenting an American expatriate who has full access to ‘the power of classical myth’. Spiritualism, a transatlantic phenomenon that was enabled by and consolidated in the expatriate community in Rome, offers complete and unrestricted access to the artistic energy of the past.

The pattern of energetic continuity and artistic resurrection is repeated on many levels in Story’s narrative, foreshadowing the final revelation of Curio’s identity with other examples of how spiritualism and art can counteract the progression of time and subsequent decay. The musical performance of Curio’s cousin Febo (Phoebus Apollo) on the lyre contains ‘fire’ and makes the musician appear to ‘radiate light’ (76). The music leads the narrator to experience a strong Roman recognition: ‘I was possessed with the idea that I had [...] seen him before’ (77). As in *Fiammetta* and *Roba di Roma*, Story employs music to signal energetic

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<sup>117</sup> Elzbieta Foeller-Pituch. ‘Ambiguous Heritage: Classical Myths in the Works of Nineteenth-Century American Writers,’ *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 1, no. 3 (1995), pp. 98-108 (p. 107).

continuity, which prompts the narrator to appreciate, fleetingly, that Febo is the living version of the artworks depicting Apollo with which he is familiar.

Later, in the final revelation scene, the voices of the living gods Venus, Minerva, Juno and Mars ‘fell upon my ears like music’ (90). ‘The likeness which had so long haunted me in Febo was now clear. But the Belvidere [sic] statue was but a poor representation of him as he then stood before me’ (113). This secondary, revelatory Roman recognition is an amplification of the type experienced by Goethe and other subsequent visitors to Rome: this is not the recognition of a building after seeing an etching, or a painting after seeing a copy, but of a living being after seeing a statue. The version of Apollo encountered by the narrator of ‘A Modern Magician’ is the living, energized version of a work of art.

Marco Curio too, is the energized manifestation of an artwork, and furthermore possesses the medium’s ability to animate objects. Curio performs a trick in which he produces from ‘a little ivory stick about three feet long [...] two brilliant serpents, that darted at me their quivering fangs.’ Curio reverses the trick and presents the rod to the narrator: ‘Certainly the serpents were not alive, although they were so perfectly imitated in coloured enamel, that I could scarcely trust my senses as I looked at them’ (84-5). The trick with what is evidently intended to be the caduceus is repeated with a pair of ‘dove’s wings on the wall’ which are transformed into talaria that, when tied to Curio’s ankles, cause him to ‘rise from his chair, and slowly float upward into the air’ (96). Story rehabilitates the appearance of apports and the displays of levitation common to the séance within a Roman context in this further example of energetic resurrection. In this case, the art object of the carved ivory rod is transformed before the narrator’s eyes into living animals, thus literalizing the earlier energetic infusion in which Febo’s song causes him to ‘radiate light’.

In the climactic scene the characters’ identities are revealed, and the narrator witnesses Curio ‘changing in his aspect into a graceful and lithe young man,’ while the ‘wrinkles wore out’ of the forehead of Curio’s father and ‘his locks looked luminous as the electric flame that follows a vessel’s wake’ (116). The transformation takes place in ‘a shabby old saloon, gone to seed, like many that may be seen in the old palaces of Rome belonging to fallen families’, which provides a contrasting entropic backdrop for the final, triumphant demonstration of the resurrection of Roman energy: ‘a few of the exiled gods of Olympus, at your service’ (103; 112). The gods are presented with their dual names, modern and original, in a way that

emphasises the reversal taking place: the narrator encounters ‘Aphrodite, whom we call Affy’, ‘Ganymede, commonly called Gianni nowadays’ and Minerva as ‘Minnie’ (112; 113; 119). The quotidian and familiar are transformed into animated, energized deities, and Story thus accomplishes in fiction the task that Home was unable to complete in sculpture. ‘A Modern Magician’ is a nineteenth-century Pygmalion myth that portrays the comprehensive resurrection of Roman energy into embodied, living versions of what were previously encountered only as art objects.

Having established a tension between the impervious, lasting energy of his characters and the entropic, ruinous landscape of Rome, the narrative, despite its anti-entropic ambitions, expresses ambivalence regarding the compatibility of the two elements in its final pages. The gods, it is revealed, are moving to America. Minerva is ‘keeping a “Young Ladies’ Seminary” at Olympus Lodge, Parnassus, Alabama’; ‘Neptune is running a Mississippi steamer’; Pluto is ‘President of a Grand Junction Coal Mining Company, and is interested in several Colorado mines’ and Mars is ‘a brigadier-general in the Federal army’ (118-121). Curio wishes for ‘a territory for our own like the Mormons’: ‘There we might plant ourselves, gather around us the old friends and believers, and renew the ancient faith. Yes, in some distant solitude of the New World we might in a pure form revive the old religion’ (121-2). Though ‘A Modern Magician’ performs a resurrection of Roman energy, the narrative here expresses doubt about its sustainability in Rome itself. In this stance, it echoes that of the ‘spirit of Keats’ in Harris’ *Lyric of the Golden Age*, which casts America as the ‘Eden of coming days’ that, when ‘the Old World died’ appeared above the ‘ashes of Great Europe Past’: America is ‘the new delivering Future’ (137). Like Kenyon and Hilda at the end of *The Marble Faun*, the gods of Story’s narrative take their Roman energy out of Rome, in the hope that it can be sustained by the energy of the New World.

When the narrator of ‘A Modern Magician’ wakes up the day after the gods’ revelation of their identities, he suspects that ‘all last night’s sights and sounds’ had ‘been a dream’ and asks, ‘Where did the actual merge into the visionary?’ Porter reads this as an indication that in Story’s narrative, ‘a discussion which began in a serious vein has drifted off into nothing’ (79-80). In fact, the story’s final image is not an accidental but a deliberate fizzling out. Having sent the gods away from Rome to America, the narrative undermines even this suggestion of continuity. In a text that explores art’s capacity to counteract entropy, the final image is one of chaos, dispersal

and absence: 'the family had left in the morning' the narrator learns, and nobody knew 'whither they had gone' (124). Story thus confronts what D. D. Home was unable to acknowledge: that entropy 'tends towards a maximum'.



**Conclusion**  
**Rome the Threshold: Roman triangulation of Anglo-American transatlanticism  
and the legacy of ‘lives that shrink’**

I have looked at the picture, as it were, given me by all your material,  
as a picture—the image or evocation, charming, heterogeneous, and a  
little ghostly, of a great cluster of people, a society practically extinct.  
Henry James<sup>1</sup>

‘There are natures, there are lives, that shrink,’ says the biographer George Withernmore in Henry James’ ‘The Real Right Thing’ (1900).<sup>2</sup> The widow of Ashton Doyne has approached him to write a multi-volume *Life* of her husband; Withernmore agrees, out of respect for his late friend. It is only once he begins the work of reading the dead man’s papers that he wonders whether, ‘the book was, on the whole, to be desired,’ and considers Ashton Doyne to possess the kind of nature ‘that shrink[s]’ (124). Withernmore feels the presence of the dead man about him as he works, figured initially as an erotic sensation of intimacy:

When once this fancy had begun to hang about him he welcomed it, persuaded it, encouraged it, quite cherished it, looking forward all day to feeling it renew itself in the evening, and waiting for the evening very much as one of a pair of lovers might wait for the hour of their appointment [...] Withernmore rejoiced at moments to feel this certitude: there were times of dipping deep into some of Doyne’s secrets when it was particularly pleasant to be able to hold that Doyne desired him, as it were, to know them. (126)

The language here echoes that of the sexualised excavation in *The Last of the Valerii*, the biographer ‘dipping deep’ into his subject just as ‘the phallic spade and the phallic eye’ of the archaeologist do in Jennifer Wallace’s terms; this is, again, a surfacing: Doyne, Withernmore says, ‘seems to rise there before me’ (131). Withernmore eroticizes the subject whose energy he wishes to access and harness, like ‘one of a pair of

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<sup>1</sup> Henry James to Mrs. Waldo Story, 6 January 1903, in *The Letters of Henry Adams*, ed. by Percy Lubbock (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1920), p. 412.  
Henry James to Sarah Butler Wister, 1897, in *James Letters IV*, ed. by Leon Edel (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Henry James, ‘The Real Right Thing’, *Collected Stories, 1889-1910* (New York: Library of America, 1985), pp. 121-134 (p. 131). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

lovers'. The fantasy extends to encompass Doyne's own erotic feelings: as Galatea statue awakens and to reciprocate Pygmalion's desire, the interrupting clause 'as it were' highlights the phrase, 'Doyne desired him' independently of the qualifying 'to know'. This relationship is further emphasized by the cyclical nature of the engagement, in which the sensation 'renew[s] itself', in the manner of the archaeologist with faith in a 'providential' store of materials to excavate. Withernmore's expectation of his project is that it will be a simple process of access and recycling: he will excavate his subject and use it to make new art in which it will, like the presence he senses, 'renew itself'. When Withernmore, in Doyne's study and surrounded by his things, says of his subject, 'I stir his fire', he describes a dual action: while he keeps the study literally warm, he is also engaged in a project of recycling and preservation of energy.

Withernmore's project, however, is undermined by the shifting persona of the ghostly presence of Doyne. After 'two or three weeks' Withernmore's 'auspicious relation' with the presence comes to an end. Doyne's sudden absence is experienced as an unsettling fracture in Withernmore's perception of continuity and connection: 'it made him not only sad not to feel Doyne's presence, but in a high degree uneasy' (128). The absence develops, later, into a presence of a different tenor: 'Immense. But dim. Dark. Dreadful' standing '[o]n the threshold – guarding it' (133). The ghost of Doyne 'forbids' Withernmore to enter the study. Withernmore reassesses his first experience of the ghost:

I was mistaken. I was [...] so excited and charmed that I didn't understand. But I understand at last. He only wanted to communicate. He strains forward out of his darkness; he reaches toward us out of his mystery; he makes us dim signs out of his horror. [...] [T]he beauty of that misled me. But he's there as a protest. (132)

The ghost was not an encouraging sign of continuity and interconnection. Rather, it was an attempted rupture: it was a signal to discontinue the biography.

Henry James had good reason to consider the difficulty of the biographer's task in 1900. At the end of 1897 he had received two-hundred-and-fifty pounds from Blackwood as an advance for a *Life* of William Wetmore Story, who died in 1895. James had promised to 'attack it at my very first leisure, and then with much

concentration,’ without mentioning a fixed completion date.<sup>3</sup> There is reasonable evidence to suggest that a significant motivation for undertaking the project was financial. 1895, the year of Story’s death, had also been a time of artistic and financial humiliation for James: his first play, *Guy Domville*, was met by ‘an aggressively disapproving public’.<sup>4</sup> Jan Seidler notes that, ‘a month before finalizing the [Story] contract, James had signed a twenty-one-year lease for Lamb House, a quaint Georgian country-house in Rye requiring redecorating and modernization,’ and that it was towards this cause that James put his advance from Blackwood (xxiv).

In ‘The Real Right Thing,’ Withermore is persuaded to undertake the Doyne biography by a combination of flattery—‘You’re the one he liked most; oh, *much!*’—and a sense of obligation to his ‘publishers, who had been, and indeed much more, Doyne’s own’ (122; 121). Blackwood, with whom James signed the contract, had been Story’s publisher for much of his life. James himself attributed his acceptance of the task to the insistence of Story’s children, complaining to William Dean Howells that the promise to undertake the work had been ‘gouged’ from him by the Story family, but that ‘there is no *subject*’.<sup>5</sup> (James was dismissive of Story’s achievements in art, comparing his statues to waxworks and describing them as ‘almost fatally unsimple’.)<sup>6</sup>

The parallels between James’ *William Wetmore Story* commission and Withermore’s *Life of Doyne* continue: like James, Withermore is confronted with the reality of the project only after he has committed to it: when first taking on the project, ‘he had not, he could now reflect, definitely considered the question of the book.’ While Withermore cites an ‘affection and admiration’ for his subject that James apparently did not possess for William Wetmore Story, the fictional biographer also admits that ‘his gratified pride’ played a part in persuading him to commit to the project (124). In a letter to Henry Adams, James narrates how Story’s children

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<sup>3</sup> James to William Blackwood, 1897, in *James Letters IV*, ed. by Leon Edel (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 59.

<sup>4</sup> Chris Kamerbeek, ‘Appearing Acts: Celebrity, Biography, and Henry James’s Ghosts of the 1890s’, *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (Fall 2009), pp. 43-68 (p. 45). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>5</sup> James to William Dean Howells, 1902, in *James Letters IV*, p. 224.

<sup>6</sup> James to Grace Norton, 1873, in *Henry James, Selected Letters*, ed. by Leon Edel (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987) p. 102.

‘absolutely *thrust* the job upon me five, six, *seven* years ago—and I have been but dodging and delaying in despair at the meagreness of the material.’<sup>7</sup>

James wrote ‘The Real Right Thing’ when he had been ‘dodging and delaying’ the Story biography for three years. ‘The Real Right Thing’ reads, in this context, as a platform on which James vents frustrations about his own biographical project: William Wetmore Story’s life, ‘The Real Right Thing’ suggests, was for James one of the ‘lives that shrink’. The short story showcases ideas about the unsuitability of certain subjects for biography, and the imprudence of attempting them, that certainly mirrored his experiences attempting to write the Story biography. The writing of a ‘Life’ following a death is presented, both in James’ writing on the Story biography and in ‘The Real Right Thing’ as the equivalent of the commemorative artistic commissions received by sculptors. The works of commemorative art undertaken by artists such as Story and Hosmer, discussed in Chapter Three, were attempts to ‘save in imperishable lines’ the energy of the deceased, to create new storage for it. James’ descriptions of ambivalence regarding biography indicates skepticism regarding the possibility of achieving such energetic continuity. As Leon Edel notes, we understand by the end of ‘The Real Right Thing’ that ‘the right thing is to leave the dead alone.’<sup>8</sup> Writers should resist the urge to ‘lay him bare [...] serve him up’ (131). The language of surfacing has been repurposed from the ecstatic ‘rising’ of the ‘excavated’ spirit to a Benjaminian ‘prying’ of the object from its shell.

The changing relationship of the writer to the literary ghost charted in ‘The Real Right Thing’ is found throughout the broad sweep of James’s writing. Chris Kamerbeek observes that ‘[t]he emergence of the spectral in Henry’s short fiction signals the tensions of embodiment and disembodiment’ (46); these tensions align James’ concerns with those of the expatriates seeking to contain or reverse the entropy of Roman energy, an interest which is addressed directly in an earlier exploration of the biographer’s task, *The Aspern Papers* (1888). The story’s biographer-narrator, seeking access to the love letters of Jeffrey Aspern, a dead poet hinted by James in his notebooks to be based on Shelley, relates to his subject in the mode in which Withermore initially receives Doyne; the subject appears to him as a ‘bright ghost’

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<sup>7</sup> James to Henry Adams, 1903, in *James Letters IV*, p. 289.

<sup>8</sup> Leon Edel, *Henry James, A Life* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), p. 561.

who ‘had returned to earth to assure me he regarded the affair as his own no less than as mine and that we should see it fraternally and fondly to a conclusion’.<sup>9</sup> The narrator thus embarks on the same project as the expatriates of the mid century in Rome, who sought to channel the energy accessed and enjoyed in Italy by the Romantics, and for whom ‘bright ghosts’ promised continuity and the potential of access. After acquiring a portrait of Aspern that provokes ‘a tremor’ in the writer and leaves him ‘flushed,’ the writer ‘hangs [it] above [his] writing table’, indicating the perceived connection between the art object as storage and his own writing project. Even here, though, the success of the project is stalled and interrupted: the letters he set out to acquire are burned by the end of the narrative, and of the portrait the narrator states, ‘[w]hen I look at it my chagrin at the loss of the letters becomes almost intolerable’ (234).

The anxiety about loss and the depletion of artistic resources that ends ‘The Aspern Papers’ is diffused throughout *Roderick Hudson*: in Rome, ‘Rowland felt at moments a vague dismay for [Roderick’s] future; he was eating his cake all at once and might have no left for the morrow’ (90). Gloriani warns that ‘passion burns out, inspiration runs to seed. Some fine day every artist finds himself sitting face to face with his lump of clay, with his empty canvas, with his sheet of blank paper, waiting in vain for the revelation to be made’ (124). Rowland worries that ‘he knew nothing about bringing dead things back to life again’, an anxiety that encompasses the neoclassical anti-entropic project in art, as well as his friend’s own survival (232). ‘What if the watch should run down,’ Roderick asks, ‘and you should lose the key? What if you should wake up some morning and find it stopped—inexorably, appallingly stopped?’ (231). What if, in other words, Harriet Hosmer never succeeds in creating her perpetual motion machine?<sup>10</sup> Entropy is figured in Roderick’s language as ‘fizzling’, a term that occurs repeatedly throughout the novel. However, Roderick’s ‘fizzling’ is applied within a romanticized vision of continuity:

“I’m prepared, at any rate, for a fizzle. It won’t be a tragedy, simply because I shan’t assist at it. The end of my work shall be the end of my life. When I’ve played my last card I shall cease to care for the game.

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<sup>9</sup> See Ellen Brown, ‘Revising Henry James: Reading the Spaces of The Aspern Papers’, *American Literature* 63, no. 2 (1991), pp. 263-78 (p. 265); James, ‘The Aspern Papers’ in *The Aspern Papers and other stories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 3-88 (p. 27). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>10</sup> Hosmer died in 1908, her perpetual motion project unfinished.

[...] I have a conviction that if the hour strikes *here*,” and he tapped his forehead, “I shall disappear, dissolve, and be carried off in something as pretty, let us hope, as the drifted spray of a fountain; *that’s* what I shall have been.” (231)

In *Roderick Hudson*, this passage suggests, anxieties regarding entropy in Rome are contained. James’ declaration in the novel’s preface that ‘relations stop nowhere’, is applicable in relation to human and artistic interaction, but also to time. Roderick might ‘dissolve’, but energetically he perseveres in ‘the drifted spray of a fountain’, which, as discussed in relation to the stories of the face in Chapter One, is itself a symbol of continuity. Roderick is presented as ghostly even while alive, ‘clad always in white, roam[ing] about like a restless ghost’, discontented, but, nonetheless, persevering (454).

The meaning of ghosts in James’ writing is unstable, and shifts between seductive presence and unstable absence over the course of his writing career, just as it does within the narrative of ‘The Real Right Thing’. Kamerbeek finds that ghosts in James’ writing in the 1880s are ‘the thing that carries over, in the sense of the remainder but also in the sense of a link—the trace that traces the line from immaterial to material’ (48). In both *Roderick Hudson* and ‘The Aspern Papers’ ghosts are seen to act as ‘remainders’, ‘traces’ and ‘links’ between, not only the ‘immaterial and material’ but also the past and the present. In ‘The Aspern Papers’, furthermore, the link appears between material and material: between the body of the dead author and his portrait. It is this kind of ghost that Withersmore expects to encounter in ‘The Real Right Thing’, and yet, ultimately, he is faced with the opposite: not continuity, but disjuncture. The forbidding, disruptive ghost of Ashton Doyne is a manifestation of loss.

This entropic ghost plays the opposite role to the spirits which, within the context of spiritualist séances, were experienced by expatriate artists in Rome as evidence of continuity and cyclical Roman artistic energy. In this sense, the ghost of Ashton Doyne can be linked to the ghosts summoned by Home and encountered by Robert Browning. For Browning these ghosts were the product of hoaxes and represented a ‘kind of alchemy in reverse: the magical transformation of gold to dust and ashes’ (Karlin, 66). Entropic ghosts were, eventually, encountered by Barrett Browning too, who discovered that her close friend Sophia Eckley, whom she had met in Rome in the winter of 1853, had deceived her about her powers as a medium

(Porter, 58). Barrett Browning's poem 'Where's Agnes?' describes Eckley's deception as a kind of death: 'Agnes' is not dead in any way that, within spiritualism, was still reachable. Instead she is 'dead that other way, / Corrupted thus and lost'.<sup>11</sup> The emptiness of fraudulent spiritualism is an entropic loss that affects not just Agnes but also the speaker—'Who's dead here? No, not she: / Rather I!'—and is figured in artistic terms as the destruction of a painting: 'Then all this paint / Runs off nature? Leaves a board?' (131). This, as in Browning's experience of Home, is the 'magical transformation of gold to dust', and signals not only personal but artistic consequences. Entropy in Rome is, for Barrett Browning as for her peers, the end of art.

The truth confronted by Barrett Browning in 'Where's Agnes?', by Browning in his response to Home, and by James in 'The Real Right Thing', was one that acknowledged a different, deathly side of Rome to which expatriate artists were constantly exposed: malaria, known as 'Roman fever' was perceived as a constant threat in the city. As Wrigley writes, 'imaginative geography of Rome as a place of pleasure and discovery, where it was possible to experience a temporal and cultural union of present and past, was revealed to have a dark and threatening dimension, all the more so as this could be perceived as inescapable' (216). In the winter of 1853, the Storys' six-year-old son Joe died, and their daughter Edith was so seriously ill that the Brownings sent their son Pennini to Isa Blagden in Florence and begged the Storys to leave Rome with Edith.<sup>12</sup> Roman Fever had direct artistic consequences. While Wrigley explores the relationship between malarial infection and influence, in practical terms, the Storys' children's illnesses had the opposite effect on their relationship between the Brownings. While both men continued to work together following the Story children's illnesses, Elizabeth Barrett Browning blamed the Storys' reliance on homeopathic medicine for the death of their son, and considered their treatment of Edith during her illness to be negligent. This caused a rift between her and the Storys that lasted for the rest of her life.<sup>13</sup> A more literal impact can be

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<sup>11</sup> Barrett Browning, 'Where's Agnes?' in *Last Poems* (New York: James Miller, 1862), p. 126. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>12</sup> Barrett Browning to Arabella Moulton-Barrett, 16-19 December 1853, *The Brownings' Correspondence, Volume 20*, pp. 18-28.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Browning to Isa Blagden, 1859, in *Dearest Isa*, p. 32.

seen on the work of the Hawthornes when their daughter Una fell ill during the winter of 1858. In Hawthorne's *Notebooks* the gap is explained by an editorial note: 'During four months of the illness of his daughter, Mr. Hawthorne wrote no word of Journal.'<sup>14</sup> The final line of Peabody Hawthorne's *Notes* further describes the silencing effect of 'Roman fever': 'My journal was suddenly interrupted by illness—even in the midst of a sentence, and was never resumed; which will account for the abruptness of the close' (549). The experience of witnessing, if not experiencing, death in Rome was so widespread that, when Story himself died, a member of his family wrote to Harriet Hosmer: 'How large a piece of your life lies buried in that Poets' Corner of the little cemetery in Rome' (Carr, 335).

A Rome that was full of ghosts, perceived by expatriate artists as a sign of continuity and artistic potential, was also, conversely, a Rome full of death. The eponymous character in James' *Daisy Miller* (1878), after enjoying the transgressive freedoms afforded women in Rome, dies from Roman Fever caught during a nighttime visit to the Colosseum where, 'The historic atmosphere was there, certainly; but the historic atmosphere, scientifically considered, was no better than a villainous miasma.'<sup>15</sup> James' writing interrogates that notion, moving between an optimism grounded in ideas of continuous energy, and depictions of personal and artistic obliteration in the city. It is this ambivalence and instability that informs his depiction of the community in *William Wetmore Story and His Friends*. Building on J. Hillis Miller's assertion that '1) All James's stories and novels are ghost stories, 2) the ghost stories proper are really, obliquely, about the act of literature',<sup>16</sup> Kathleen Lawrence describes the Story biography as his 'most ambitious ghost story' (235).

While Withersmore's project in 'The Real Right Thing' is abandoned after the intervention of the angry and entropic ghost of his subject, no such excuse to abandon the Story biography presented itself to James. Though the unstable ghosts of Story and his friends variously suggested entropy and continuity, personal and financial obligations remained in place, and six years after taking on the project, *William Wetmore Story and His Friends* was published. Fuller is a 'Margaret-ghost'; Gibson

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<sup>14</sup> Hawthorne, *The Complete Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Cambridge: Houghton, Mifflin & Company, 1883), p. 486.

<sup>15</sup> James, *Daisy Miller* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 60.

<sup>16</sup> J. Hillis Miller, *Literature as Conduct: Speech Acts in Henry James* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), p. 299.



has ‘turned to the ghostly’; Gaskell’s recollections of her time in Rome are a ‘ghost-story’ (127, 258, 353).

Our boxful of ghosts ‘compose,’ hang together, consent to mutual dependence. If it is a question of living again, they can live but by each other’s help, so that they close in, join hands, press together for warmth and contact. [...] The subject is the *period*—it is the period that holds the elements together, rounds them off, makes them right. They partake of it, they preserve it, in return; they justify it, and it justifies the fond chronicler. Periods really need no excuses. (James, *William Wetmore Story*, 16)

These ghosts resemble neither the inviting, energetic presence of ‘The Aspern Papers’ nor the entropic, chaotic rebuttal of Doyme in ‘The Real Right Thing’. Instead, they are couched firmly in the questioning conditional: ‘*if* it is a question of living again’. If they are to survive, to be continuous, this passage suggests, it is because of a collective element they share. They ‘preserve’ each other and their ‘period’ in an image drawn from the spiritualist séance: ‘they close in, join hands’.

Sheila Teahan considers *William Wetmore Story*, ‘less a conventional biography than a cultural fiction’,<sup>17</sup> while for Marnie Jones, it is, ‘autobiography, not biography’.<sup>18</sup> The text veers between and combines these genres, in the mode enabled by the multimedia culture of the expatriate community in Rome. It is, in this way, a group self-portrait, put together by a peripheral surviving member whose wavering belief in continuity and artistic energy suggests, but does not confirm, a permanent connection between the artist and his other subjects. While working on the book, James wrote to Story’s daughter-in-law that:

I have looked at the picture, as it were, given me by all your material, as a picture—the image or evocation, charming, heterogeneous, and a little ghostly, of a great cluster of people, a society practically extinct, with Mr. and Mrs. Story, naturally, all along, the centre, the pretext, so to speak, and the *point d'appui*.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Sheila Teahan, ‘My Sculptor/My Self: A Story of Reading,’ *Henry James Review*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (2002), pp. 246-54 (p 246).

<sup>18</sup> Marnie Jones, ‘Telling his own story: Henry James’s *William Wetmore Story*’, *Biography*, Vol. 10, Number 3, Summer 1987, pp. 241-256 (p. 241). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>19</sup> Henry James to Mrs. Waldo Story, 6 January 1903, in *The Letters of Henry Adams*, ed. by Percy Lubbock (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1920), p. 412.

To ‘look at a picture [...] as a picture’ is to assert that the project of *William Wetmore Story and His Friends* is ekphrastic. To write about a community in which energy was experienced as flowing between people and art was as much to write about art as it was to write about people. This fact is emphasized in James’ use of the verb ‘make’ in reference to the book. As explored in the first and second chapters of this thesis, artists recycling Roman energy made, rather than created, their art.

The interconnection facilitated and enforced by the expatriate community’s relationship to Roman energy creates a logistical necessity for the group biography: complaining of the ‘meagreness of the material’ of Story’s life alone, James decides to ‘make a little volume on the old Roman, American-Roman, Hawthornesque and other bygone days’.<sup>20</sup> It is impossible to separate Story from the place in which he operated, and, furthermore, it is impossible to separate that place from the many other artists who worked within and through it. ‘Specific stories are the products of specific spaces,’ asserts Franco Moretti. ‘[W]ithout a certain kind of space, a certain kind of story is simply impossible.’<sup>21</sup> The specificity of spaces and the artworks they produce arise from convergences: could the ‘*convergence* of distinct lineages [...] also produce new forms?’ Moretti asks.<sup>22</sup> The ‘specific space’ of mid-century Rome identified by this thesis as a site of cultural, artistic, international and inter-gendered convergence enabled by notions of Roman energy produces a story in which ‘[t]he subject is the *period*—it is the period that holds the elements together’, which is presented as a ‘heterogeneous’ ‘picture.’<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> James to William Dean Howells, 1902, *James Letters IV*, p. 224

<sup>21</sup> Franco Moretti, *Atlas of the European Novel, 1800-1900* (London and New York: Verso, 1998) p. 100.

<sup>22</sup> Franco Moretti, ‘Evolution, World Systems, *Weltliteratur*, in *The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature: From the European Enlightenment to the Global Present*, ed. by David Damrosch, Natalie Melas, Mbongiseni Buthelezi (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 399-408 (p. 403).

<sup>23</sup> Prior to the unification of Italy, as discussed in the introduction and third chapter of this thesis, Rome’s status as a city-state underscored a sense of the city as a closed system, alongside competing narratives of its openness and accessibility to artists. The unification of Italy, and Rome’s subsequent connection to the rest of the country via new railway lines, heightened anxiety regarding entropy, as is seen in the prefaces to editions of Story’s *Roba di Roma* (see chapter three). Moretti makes links between artistic genres and geopolitical entities, finding a ‘strong affinity ... between the novel and the geo-political reality of the nation-state’ and arguing that other forms, including visual art, better represent ‘the city (especially early on, when

Moretti examines, as does this thesis, the relationship between convergences and literary forms in the context of nineteenth-century scientific discourse. Moretti's exploration of Darwinian theories of evolution identifies 'two distinct world literatures: one that precedes the eighteenth century—and one that follows it,' which he describes as, 'Weltliteratur in the twenty-first century'. The first, 'characterized by strong internal diversity [...] produces new forms mostly by divergence; and is best explained by (some version of) evolutionary theory.' The second 'is unified by the international literary market; it shows a growing, and at times stunning amount of sameness; its mechanism of change is convergence'.<sup>24</sup> This thesis has examined the convergences that occurred in mid-century Rome and the unique conditions, the 'certain kind of space', that in turn produced 'a certain kind' of artwork and artistic production. Considering this Roman moment through the lens of Moretti's two world literatures, it is however apparent that it was also a form of divergence—geographical, cultural and artistic—in which British and American artists *diverged* from their home cultures *and* simultaneously *converged* in Rome. The work produced in the Rome of this study thus falls in the middle of Moretti's two definitions. Chronologically situated between eighteenth and twenty-first centuries, it arises from both divergence and convergence. In this sense, the subjects studied in this thesis are examples of the 'world literature' proposed by David Damrosch, which is not 'fated to disintegrate into the conflicting multiplicity of separate national traditions', nor 'swallowed up in the white noise that Janet Abu-Lughod has called "global babble."' Rather, it is 'a mode of circulation and of reading, a mode that is as applicable to individual works as to bodies of material'.<sup>25</sup>

In pursuit of access to the systems and circulation of Roman energy, the artists of the mid century considered in this thesis created their own mode of circulation that reached across the Atlantic between Britain and America and was triangulated by

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cities are small and have walls)' which can be understood 'with a single glance'. See Moretti, *Atlas*, p. 17. The idea of the midcentury that energy could be transferred between all genres of artforms can be read in the light of Moretti's argument as a product of the closed system of the city. The puncturing of that system following unification thus has real impact on the genres of art that can participate in the Roman system.

<sup>24</sup> Moretti, 'Evolution', pp. 406-7.

<sup>25</sup> David Damrosch, *What is World Literature?* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 5.

Rome. Amanda Claybaugh has shown that in the nineteenth century ‘the transatlantic circulation of texts created an Anglo-American public sphere’.<sup>26</sup> Within this Anglo-American sphere, British and American writers influenced and informed each other’s work across the Atlantic in a balanced exchange; ‘the literary marketplaces of the United States and Britain were more or less symmetrical’ (Claybaugh, 19). This symmetry is explained in terms of a division of influence between the two nations: ‘British authors were more celebrated and British reviewers were more influential, but US readers were more numerous and US publishing houses were increasingly more powerful’ (Claybaugh, 16). The introduction of Rome into Claybaugh’s formulation mediates the transatlantic exchange. The ‘Anglo-American public sphere’, which Claybaugh considers in relation to social reform, is one that was developed and enabled by the expatriate artistic community in Rome. Just as Rome mediated and consolidated transatlantic Anglo-American spiritualism, the city acted as a triangulating touchstone for broader artistic discourse.

In Rome, British and American artists encountered each other, and also, as the city ‘stamped them with their identity’ as an artist within its specific Anglo-American artistic sphere, encountered themselves. Thus, Elizabeth Gaskell, after staying with the Storys in Rome and developing a close friendship with Charles Eliot Norton, describes her experience as one that brought her closer to America: To Norton she wrote of ‘happy Roman days—I have loved America ever since’ (Whitehill, 120). Jenny Uglow, describing the relationship between Norton and Gaskell, writes that Gaskell ‘saw Rome [...] through the filter of [...] Charles Norton’s presence’.<sup>27</sup> The reverse of this statement is also true: Gaskell saw Norton, and beyond him, America, through the filter of Rome. This reading helps to explain an incident of critical divergence in readings of a line in a Gaskell letter written to Norton in January 1860. Jane Whitehill’s *Letters of Mrs. Gaskell and Charles Eliot Norton* (1932) gives: ‘Sometimes I dream I am in America, but it always looks like home, whh I *know* it is not’ (43), whereas J. A. V. Chapple and Arthur Pollard’s *The Letters of Mrs. Gaskell* (1997) reads, ‘Sometimes I dream I am in America, but it always looks like Rome, whh I *know* it is not’ (597). This disparity is symptomatic

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<sup>26</sup> Amanda Claybaugh, *The Novel of Purpose: Literature and Social Reform in the Anglo-American World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), p. 3. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

<sup>27</sup> Jenny Uglow, *Elizabeth Gaskell: A Habit of Stories*, p. 424.

of the link between the three places evoked here and in Gaskell's other writing: her 'home' in England, her 'home' in Rome, and America, which, though she never went there, through its connection via Rome to the other two 'homes' was also a kind of home: a description of views from Norton's American study provoke, like Rome, 'a kind of a Heimweh,—as if I had seen them once, and yearned to see them again' (Whitehill, 12). The disputed line in her letter to Norton is indicative of the extent to which Rome was Gaskell's threshold to a new form of Anglo-American culture. And in its role as a threshold Rome behaved—like the things, the spiritual copyists and the spiritual mediums practising within Rome itself—as a mediator.<sup>28</sup>

This thesis has shown how expatriate artists' engagement with the idea of energy in mid- to late nineteenth-century Rome informed their conception of making art, exchanging ideas, and their relationship to the city and each other. Commonly-shared ideas about energy and its movement, the roots of which came from debates in contemporary science, provided a framework and vocabulary for expatriate artists to apply to their experience of inspiration, productivity, loss and decay in the city.

The first chapter, 'Rome the Mine', considered the ways in which expatriate artists experienced Roman things as energetic, and the ways in which contemporary archaeological practice related to artists' ideas of accessing and harnessing artistic energy. By using the metaphor of the mine to describe Rome and its rich artistic resources, expatriate artists explored their anxiety regarding the depletion of artistic resources, which echoed growing contemporary concern regarding fossil fuel depletion. However, as the second chapter, 'Rome the Factory', goes on to show, expatriate artists addressed this anxiety by participating in copying practices that recycled and transferred artistic energy rather than depleting it. The metaphor of Rome as a factory in which artworks were 'made' rather than 'created' gave rise to debate and criticism regarding the originality and authenticity of new work that dogged neoclassical sculptors in particular. However, expatriate artists, most notably

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<sup>28</sup> Chloe Chard finds that 'the crossing of boundaries' and 'transgression' were key components of the Romantic conception and narration of the Grand Tour. The mid-to-late century notion of Rome as itself a threshold indicates the evolution of this idea in the nineteenth century. See Chloe Chard, 'Crossing Boundaries and Exceeding Limits: Destabilization, Tourism, and the Sublime' in *Transports: Travel, Pleasure, and Imaginative Geography, 1600-1830*, ed. by Chloe Chard and Helen Langdon (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), pp. 117-150 (p. 133).

Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, identified a difference between ‘mechanical’ copying that led to the destruction of Benjaminian aura, and ‘spiritual’ copying that recycled and preserved artistic energy. This notion of ‘spiritual’ copying was closely linked to the practice of spiritualism, explored in chapter three, ‘Rome the Séance’. The practice of spiritualism leant on the same ideas regarding the movement, transfer and preservation of energy that were applied by expatriate artists to art in Rome, and made scientific claims that linked spiritual energy to newly discovered forces such as electricity. Spiritualism sought to counteract entropy, and was thus useful to the expatriate artists’ project of preserving a continuous flow of artistic energy. Thus, Harriet Hosmer’s parallel projects of neoclassical sculpture, practicing spiritualism and creating a perpetual motion machine all sought to resolve the same concern.

These three chapters, combined, present the city of Rome as a site of transfer, facilitating the exchange of ideas and inspiration, conceived of by its expatriate artist inhabitants as artistic energy. As such, the city operated as a transitional, triangulating point of encounter during the period between British and American artists, who produced art that was concerned with harnessing, recycling and preserving the artistic energy they found in Rome. The city’s mobile, transferrable artistic energy bridged the divide between old and new things, between living and dead artists in Rome, between the members of its nineteenth-century expatriate community, and between the old and new worlds of Europe and America.

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